

**University of London  
Institute of Education**

**The Status of Teachers in Kuwait, and its Relationship  
with Teacher Education**

**Mashail Alobaid**

This submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in Education

**July  
2006**

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own

Word count (exclusive of appendices, tables and bibliography): 80947 words.



## *Acknowledgments*

*I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to my supervisors, Professor Denis Lawton and Dr Paddy Walsh. Through out the years of study their guidance has cultivated the seeds of this thesis.*

*I would also like to thank the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training for its financial support.*

*Finally, I give my sincere respect and appreciation to my father, Dr Youssef Alobaid. His consistent love, encouragement and help are exceptional. To him I dedicate this work.*

## ***Abstract***

This thesis is an investigation into teachers' status in Kuwait, what it is and the reasons for it. The question was posed and systematically investigated as to the standing of teachers, an issue of great significance for Kuwait and its education system. The thesis also explores the connections between teacher status and teacher education and the possibility of using improvements in teacher education to raise the status of teachers.

The study is heavily based on empirical work, specifically: three substantial surveys and a case study that includes a fourth smaller survey. The collection of data is predominantly, though not exclusively, quantitative.

A short questionnaire on teachers' status was administered to, 5200 citizens, 0.65% of the population, using a network or 'snowball' technique. A longer questionnaire was administered to 320 final-year students in a cross-section of Kuwaiti secondary schools. A third questionnaire was administered to 1200 teachers (4% of the teacher population). The response rates for all three surveys exceeded 95%. The hypothetically significant variables considered in these surveys variously included gender, socio-cultural group, age, family status, academic ability, professional experience, subject specialism and nationality. In addition, an extended case study was carried out in the College of Basic Education, the training institution for primary teachers in Kuwait.

The findings of these surveys and of the case-study are compared with each other and, to a lesser extent, with previous research that has been conducted in regard to teacher status in other educational systems.

At an early stage of the analysis, some findings were presented to two members of the 'educational elite' in Kuwait for their interpretation and comment.

The following are some examples of the findings of the study. Kuwaiti society sees the relative status of teachers as middle-order. The public have higher views of teachers than either teachers or trainee teachers have of themselves. The standing of the College of Basic Education is perceived as low by all sectors, including trainees at the college. Up to 28% of school-leavers were considering teaching as a career option, but almost none of these are academically able students. Kuwaitis choose teaching very much more for pragmatic than for 'vocational' reasons. Socio-cultural group is the variable with the widest influence on the matters investigated. Gender is less significant than expected in some areas.

# Contents

	Pages
<b>Chapter One: Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Part One: The Nature of The Research	
<i>Choosing This Topic</i>	
<i>Aims of This Dissertation</i>	
<i>Outline of Fieldwork</i>	
<i>Research Questions</i>	
<i>Thesis Outline</i>	
Part Two: The Context of The Research: Kuwaiti Society, Culture and Education	
<i>Introduction to Kuwait</i>	
<i>Teachers and Education</i>	
<i>The Education System</i>	
<i>Higher Education in Kuwait</i>	
Summary	
<b>Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework.....</b>	<b>24</b>
Introduction	
<b>‘Scientific’ Literature</b>	
<i>Sociological Impact on The Judgment of ‘Status’</i>	
<i>Socio-cultural Groups</i>	
<i>Gender Issues and Status</i>	
<i>Teachers’ Status Within a Feminised Profession</i>	
<i>Salaries and Status</i>	
<i>Teacher Shortage and Status</i>	
<i>The Public, The Media, and Teachers’ Status</i>	
<i>Trust, Accountability and The Status of Teachers</i>	
<b>‘Deliberative’ Literature</b>	
<i>Teachers’ Profession and Status</i>	
<i>Teacher Education</i>	
Conclusion	
<b>Chapter Three: Methodology.....</b>	<b>68</b>
Introduction	
Justification of The Quantitative / Qualitative Balance in This Study	
Triangulation	
Initial Exploration	
Research Phases and Approaches	
The Survey Methodology and The Questionnaire Method	
<i>Dealing With The Limitations of Questionnaire-Based Survey Methodology</i>	
<i>Constructing The Questionnaires: Variables, Samples and Access</i>	
<i>The Public Survey and Questionnaire;</i>	
<i>The School-leavers survey and questionnaire;</i>	
<i>The Teacher Survey and Questionnaire;</i>	
A Case Study, and The Methods Used in it:	
<i>The Questionnaire;</i>	
<i>The Interviews and Group Interviews;</i>	
<i>Observations;</i>	
<i>Document Analysis</i>	
The Elite Interviews	
Analysing The Data	

<b>Chapter Four: The Public Opinion Survey.....</b>	<b>101</b>
Introduction	
Part One: The Overall Picture	
Part Two: Tabulation and Analyses for Individual Questions	
Part Three: Further Analyses for Cluster of Questions	
Part Four: Models of Respondents' Profiles	
Summary	
<b>Chapter Five: School leavers Opinion Survey.....</b>	<b>131</b>
Introduction	
Part One: The Overall Picture	
Part Two: Tabulation and Analyses of Groups of Individual Questions	
Part Three: Further Analyses	
Summary	
<b>Chapter Six: Teachers Opinion Survey.....</b>	<b>172</b>
Introduction	
Part One: The Overall Picture	
Part Two: Tabulation and Thematic Analyses	
Part Three: Further Analyses	
Summary	
<b>Chapter Seven: Teacher Education.....</b>	<b>208</b>
Data presentation, Analyses, and Discussion	
Summary	
<b>Chapter Eight: Conclusion and Recommendations.....</b>	<b>236</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>261</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>275</b>
A. Public Questionnaire	
B. School leavers' Questionnaire	
C. Teacher Questionnaire	
D. Student- teacher Questionnaire	
E. College Lecturer Interview Schedule	
F. Student- teacher Group Interviews Schedule	
G. Elite Members' Interview Schedule	
H. Public Survey (Tables)	
I. Teacher Survey (Tables)	
J. Student-teacher Survey (Tables)	
K. Kuwait Demographics	
Public Questionnaire (In Arabic)	
School leavers' Questionnaire (In Arabic)	
Teacher Questionnaire (In Arabic)	
Student- teacher Questionnaire (In Arabic)	

# Chapter One: Introduction

## Part One: The Nature of The Research

### Choosing this topic

As a Kuwaiti teacher I know of numerous teachers who enjoy teaching – including myself – who are either leaving for postgraduate education or changing their career in an attempt to distance themselves from what they see as the relatively low status which teachers have. Their departure, I believe, has a negative impact on the education system as a whole. The actual status of teachers in Kuwait, however, is unclear. This study is an attempt to investigate that status and highlight its causes and effects.

The expression 'status', as used in relation to teachers, is defined by Simpson<sup>1</sup> as both the standing or regard accorded them, as evidenced by the level of appreciation of the importance of their function and of their competence in performing it, and the working conditions, remuneration and other material benefits accorded them relative to other professional groups.

There is a core meaning of the English word 'status' – 'standing in society' and, as it happens, there is an Arabic word مكانة إجتماعية that exactly translates this core meaning. However, 'status' is a slippery concept; for instance, do nurses enjoy high status? The answer here depends on whether or not status is related to 'being admired', and this may vary from one context to another. Sometimes they are connected, sometimes not. Or again, how does 'status' relate to 'prestige'? However, the same slipperiness and context-specificity attach to the Arabic word. So we do not have a translation problem at the level of the word.

Of course, the ingredients or factors in judgements of status may vary from culture to culture (e.g. being religious, or being associated with the armed forces). This research attempts to identify the factors that particularly influence judgements in Kuwait in the case of teachers' status.

To address the main problem of context-specificity more directly: this problem is the extent to which broadly 'moral' qualities (including considerations of honour) are being taken into account in particular judgements of 'standing in society'. If a survey

---

<sup>1</sup> Simpson, T., 1997, *Diversity, difference and discontinuity: remapping teacher education for the next decade*, *The public perception of teachers: A different projection*, Paper presented at the Australian Teacher Education Association Conference

suggests, for example, that nurses are among the most admired and/or trusted of professions, it is reasonable to see that as contributing positively to their 'standing in society'. And the same survey might suggest that politicians have low standing (whether that moral judgement on them is deserved or not). But a different survey might show that nurses had low status and politicians had high status because the factors being considered now focus exclusively on material elements like salary and prestige. 'Status' here is morally neutral. Perhaps most uses of the word 'status' are morally neutral, but the fact remains that there is also the broader sense of 'standing in society' that includes, or prioritises, considerations of morality and honour.

It is an intrinsically comparative or relational concept and word; that is, the core meaning, implicitly if not explicitly, is the standing of an occupation in the society relative to the standing of other occupations, for instance, in this study the standing of teachers in Kuwaiti society relative to the standing of the recognised professions. That is why it is natural to use comparative adjectives like 'higher' and 'lower' in connection with status. Also, a large difference to the judgement of status is made by the cluster with which status is compared; the standing of teachers in a society might be high compared to occupations generally, but low compared to other recognized professions.

My research investigates the status of teachers in Kuwait in both the narrower neutral sense and the broader moral sense. It adds up to a study of how Kuwaitis view the profession of teaching.

This research places particular emphasis on the link between the status of the teaching profession and that of teacher education, for the reason that this link has not been largely addressed in the literature and because it may be the element that could be most easily revolutionized, especially in a small country with only two teacher training institutions.

### **Aims of this dissertation**

In this thesis I shall look closely at teaching as a profession and its professional status. My investigation seeks, firstly, to comprehend how Kuwaiti society views teachers and how teachers view themselves, their work and their profession.

Secondly, I attempt to identify the extent of association, if any, between teacher status and teacher education institutions. It may be that any significant change

regarding teachers' status (especially in Kuwait) should start from these institutions. The question here is: in a small rich country with two teacher training institutions is it feasible to make a dramatic change that can make teaching as a profession more attractive, and thereby attract more teachers of good quality?

### **Outline of fieldwork**

The study is heavily based on fieldwork, predominantly but not exclusively quantitative in character. It includes:

- A survey of the general public regarding teachers' status in Kuwait, that attempts to identify the public's opinion of teachers, and the elements which most affect its judgment. It also investigates public opinion on the quality of teachers' institutions and their outcomes.
- A survey of school leavers, to scrutinize their perceptions of teaching as a career option and the rationale and implications of their views. This also identifies these students' views on the status of teachers and teacher institutions.
- A survey of teachers themselves, to capture a general idea of how they perceive themselves and how they think the public perceive them, and also to examine their views on the status of teacher institutions.
- A case study of a teacher training college. This more qualitative study helps to capture a deeper understanding of the possible impact of teacher training institutions on the status of the teaching profession.
- Finally, an early summary of the findings was presented to two educational leaders, looking for their interpretations and comments.

### **Research questions**

The fieldwork just described was guided by the two main research questions already alluded to in the statement of aims above, which in turn generated sub-questions:

- What is the status of teachers in Kuwait?
  - How do the general public view teachers?
  - How do teachers view themselves?
  - How do school-leavers view teaching as a profession?
  - What factors define status for Kuwaitis?
  - What are the perceived attractions and negative features of teaching as a profession in Kuwait?

- How does the status of teacher education impact on teachers' status?
  - How does the general public view teacher education institutions?
  - How do teachers view their teacher education programmes?
  - How do school-leavers view teacher education institutions?
  - How do student-teachers view their teacher education programmes?
  - Who enters the teaching profession, and why?

### **Thesis Outline**

Part Two of the introduction provides a picture of the cultural, political and economic background of Kuwait society, its educational system and its teachers' institutions, to enable the reader to capture an image of what it is like to be a teacher in Kuwait.

Chapter Two assembles the theoretical framework of the study. It draws on the existing literature concerning the factors that would be expected to have a significant influence on the status of teaching as a profession. The assumption here is that this status is determined by many considerations: salaries, demands on teachers, the feminisation of the profession, accountability, and trust. Also, the chapter discusses the effect of the media on the status of teachers. The literature provides a good ground for some further enquiry into the impact of each factor in Kuwait. Then the discussion moves toward 'deliberative' literature, drawing on the Hargreaves-Goodson taxonomy of professionalism (1996) and Shulman's conceptualisation of teachers' knowledge (1995). It also discusses the role of teacher education in defining teachers' professional status.

Chapter Three is a representation and justification of the methodological paradigms and fieldwork used in the study. The study is predominantly quantitative, involving four large questionnaire surveys. However, the last of these surveys is set into a mainly qualitative case-study of an institution.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six present and analyse the findings and data from phase one – much the longest phase – of the study, consisting of three major surveys presented in turn: of public opinion, school-leavers' opinions, and teachers' opinion.

Chapter Seven presents phase two, a month-long case study of Kuwait's College of Basic Education. As well as tabularizing and analysing the findings of a student-teacher questionnaire, it draws highlights from focus groups and interviews with students and lecturers.



Chapter Eight synthesises and discusses the findings, while also drawing on a short phase of fieldwork, two 'elite' interviews with the present Minister of Education and one of his predecessors. Then the chapter moves to discuss some implications for policy and practice based on the main issues arising from this research, and outlines possible strategies that could be implemented.

## **Part Two: Context of Research: Kuwaiti Society, Culture and Education**

This section endeavours to address the historical, economic and cultural background of Kuwait, in order to convey some understanding of the sources of the sociological and educational ideologies of the country, with the purpose of clarifying the teaching profession and teachers' status in Kuwait.

### **Introduction to Kuwait**

Kuwait is a small, rich, and new country. Being acquainted with its story is essential for comprehending the basis of the public judgment in regard to the status of teachers. The story of the State of Kuwait began in the 18th century when a number of families emigrated from central Arabia to land situated on the western coast of the Arabian Gulf. Fishing, pearl diving and trade were the basics of the economy. Political power lay in the hands of the elite (sheiks)<sup>2</sup>.

At the turn of the 20th century, there were very few educational facilities in the country. There was no public education for the first part of the century, and funding for education came mainly from Kuwait's wealthier private citizens. The only form of education was by "katateeb", teachers with basic knowledge of religion and the Arabic language who would educate groups of children in their homes.<sup>3</sup> Life was simple, basic and soaked in traditional values and religion.

It remained so until 1936, when the British struck oil.<sup>4</sup> This was the turning point for Kuwait. The discovery of oil transformed the economic situation. Funds were available for all sectors, including health services, the military, and construction, and,

---

<sup>2</sup> Briks, J.S. and Rimmer, J.A., 1984, *Developing education systems in the oil states of Arabia: conflicts of purpose and focus*. London: University of Durham.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> In the late nineteenth century fears of growing Ottoman influence led Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah to enter into an agreement with Great Britain, which established Kuwait as an autonomous British protectorate. Under the 1899 agreement, Kuwait maintained control over its internal affairs, while Great Britain assumed responsibility for the country's security and foreign relations. In the mid-1930s work began on the development of oil industry, but it was interrupted by World War II.

naturally, the demand for education increased. Before the discovery of oil, only two private schools had been established.<sup>5</sup> The government took control of education in 1939 and was running 17 schools by 1945. As oil production picked up in the post-World War II era, the government began investing large sums of money in social services.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1936 and 1961, the national budget for education increased dramatically. The government took responsibility for the beginning of formal education, by importing a curriculum from Egypt and other Arabic countries, hiring teachers and administrators from abroad and making education free for all. Students were provided with free textbooks, sports materials, clothes, medical care and free transportation to and from school. This governmental attitude played a vital role in the promotion of literacy among the people.<sup>7</sup> By 1960, there were about 45,000 students enrolled in the Kuwaiti educational system, including 18,000 girls.<sup>8</sup>

After Kuwait became independent in 1961, education began to move rapidly. The Department of Education became the Ministry of Education. Kuwait's constitution was influenced by the Egyptian constitution, which insists upon equality between men and women in access to education. Investment in education was perceived as essential in preparing Kuwaitis to become a work force. Kuwait is a revenue spender rather than a generator of wealth, which means that the economy serves the needs of the people without the need to benefit from their work<sup>9</sup>. This affluent situation has created the opportunity, it might have been thought, for an ideal system to be established.

In the 1960's there were several more advances in education. The Constitution of 1962 stipulates that education is assured and promoted by the State, thus reflecting the belief that education is a fundamental right of all citizens. Schooling was first made compulsory in 1965, and in 1967 a private school system re-emerged with the help of considerable government subsidies.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Mursi, M.M., 1990., *The education in the Arab gulf states*, Doha: University of Qatar, Education Research Centre, vol. 28, p. 325

<sup>6</sup> Al-Mubailesh, k., 2003, *A complete guide to Kuwait on your desk*, [online], Available: <http://www.kuwaitiah.net/religion1.html> [7 April 2005]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

<sup>7</sup> Al-Misnad, S., 1985, *The development of modern education in the gulf*. London: Ithaca press, p. 41

<sup>8</sup> Al-Mubailesh, k., 2003, *op cit*.

<sup>9</sup> Briks, J.S and Rimmer, J.A., 1984, *op.cit*.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Mubailesh, k., *A complete guide to Kuwait on your desk*, [online], Available: <http://www.kuwaitiah.net/religion1.html> [7 April 2005]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

As the country's wealth has boomed, so too have investments in education. Increasing numbers of scholarships abroad are available, and there is an increasing enrolment of children in schools. All levels of education have now become available to all students.<sup>11</sup> The government believes that with industrialization comes modernization.<sup>12</sup>

Official Kuwaiti statistics for the year 2003 show almost full enrolment at primary and intermediate levels, widespread provision of secondary education, and large numbers of students continuing education to and beyond university level.<sup>13</sup> Currently, university education is within the reach of and available to all students. The view is that education is the right of all Kuwaitis.

Kuwait has become a very strange cultural cocktail. Its newfound wealth has given rise to an extremely relaxed and luxurious way of life that contrasts greatly with its traditional heritage. The streets are lined with mansions; the shopping malls are all new and lavish. Marble and inspiring architecture are evident all around. Kuwaitis no longer cook, clean or work in any basic manual professions. There is a huge cheap imported workforce that keeps the country going.

Yet despite this European chic and superstar luxury, older traditions in dress, food and hospitality are as strong as ever. In particular, it is evident that Kuwait is in all respects an Islamic country. Islam penetrates not just the landscape, with mosques on every corner, but also the heart of every Kuwaiti. The society respects those learned in religion and promotes the Islamic way of charity, chastity and goodwill.

In my citizen's critical opinion, the Kuwaiti government is generous to the point of being lavish; this has created a society that is somewhat spoilt and extremely "laid back". Whatever job you do, the salary will be substantial, so Kuwaitis tend to do what is required of them professionally, and not more than that! Jobs are secure and long term, and there is really no place at all in the society for an ambitious workaholic.

---

<sup>11</sup> Ministry of education, 1998, *Kuwait statistics* (in Arabic).

<sup>12</sup> Today Kuwait has one of the highest per capita incomes in the world. Its initial prosperity was founded almost completely on oil reserves, which, at an estimated 98 billion barrels, are one-tenth of the world's total. Over time, however, Kuwait used oil earnings to make large investments abroad. Gross domestic product (GDP) for 2000 was \$37.8 billion, giving Kuwait a per capita GDP of \$19,040.

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Education, 2003, *Kuwait statistics* (in Arabic).

Citizenship in Kuwait means loyalty, love, appreciation and respect for the country. There is a fierce patriotism amongst nationals, and it is considered very inappropriate not to accept this concept of citizenship. Kuwaitis are very proud of their nationality, and obtaining Kuwaiti citizenship is made extremely difficult. Relations between Kuwaitis and immigrants are strained, and foreigners often complain of unfair treatment in the workplace.

It is difficult to be objective about a society that you have grown up in, and in some ways you can miss the very essence that makes that society unique. I thought it would be interesting to look at Kuwait through the eyes of a British woman who married my Kuwaiti brother and lived within the society for four years. The following piece is her description of Kuwait, written at my request and in my company with my prompting her in the background:

Kuwait can be described as a fairytale culture. Once you step off the plane you feel immediately struck by the fastidious cleanliness and high shine of the brand new looking airport. It is easy to pick out Kuwaiti passengers from foreigners not because they necessarily look different, but because you get a sense of their ownership – this is their airport in their country and everyone who works there, works for them. It is an introduction into a very patriotic and hierarchical society where everything you see or touch belongs to Kuwaitis and even though the foreigners outnumber the nationals, they never gain more than a visiting acceptance at the least, and encouragement to be more like Kuwaitis at best.

The drive from the airport is fast, the roads are new and you get the feeling that everything has just been built, which is true to some extent. At first you think you are passing apartment blocks until you realize that they are houses. House design is competitive and architecturally stunning. Grandeur is nothing to be ashamed about! As the cars pass, you notice that they are all new models and exceptionally clean, as though you are in an outdoor showroom. But then, Kuwait is like one big showroom of ideal living. Enter the houses and you will find yourself swamped in marble and Italian furniture. You will not find a single cushion out of place at any time, and you will not enter an unkempt car.

As you look around at the people, it is easy to see the Kuwaitis. They are always immaculate. There are no bad hair days, no uncoordinated dress and casual Kuwait attire would be considered formal in most other countries. The national male attire consists of white garments, yet no matter how long you live there you will not witness a crease or stain, and they are whiter than white. It is so strange at first because you feel as though you are in a surreal environment, and the only sense of normality you experience is the sight of foreigners who look somewhat dishevelled in comparison.

An enormous taskforce of foreign workers is the backbone of this high-gloss existence. Labour is cheap and money is plentiful. Within every household, there are maids who see to every need of every occupant. They work from

morning till night. All the cars are cleaned in the morning. The house is cleaned from top to bottom every day, regardless of whether it's necessary. As each family member rises, breakfast is served and clothing pressed for the day. As each family member leaves the vicinity of their bedroom, it will be cleaned thoroughly and everything put back in perfect order. Throughout the day, the maids are at the beck and call of the family, and usually intercoms are fitted throughout the house so they can be reached anywhere without shouting. Chefs prepare food, and it is available from lunch time until the early morning hours every day. It is like living in your own five-star hotel. It is not unusual to have maids for the children, and some households actually have a maid for each child! In fact it is not unusual for the domestic help to outnumber the family members.

You notice this workforce everywhere. Petrol stations are manned so that Kuwaitis are not just blessed with the cheapest fuel prices, they don't have to fill up their own tanks. Service standards are high, simply because Kuwaitis let it be felt that they will not be mistreated by any foreign workers. Shopping malls are glossy and meticulously clean. Of course there are older houses and less fabulous parts of Kuwait, but you simply don't notice them as they are hidden in back streets that as a Kuwaiti you are highly unlikely to ever go down. Life here is absolute luxury. There is plenty of money to buy anything and everything that you could wish to buy. And perhaps that is why Kuwait is so different from other countries, as wealth is well distributed amongst Kuwaitis. Wages are high and tax free, and the government is generous to a fault. The government gives interest free housing to newly married couples, and the prince allocates £8000 as a wedding gift providing you marry a Kuwaiti. Scholarships are plentiful and international. It is exceptionally cheap to dine out in the finest of restaurants. Whatever the society needs, the government is usually behind them. But then again this is a very rich country that is so incredibly small with an even smaller national population.

Although crime does exist, it is not really publicized, so you feel that you are in an extremely safe environment at all times. Doors are not locked and there are no house security systems or guard dogs. Considering the wealth on show, this is highly unusual. One does not hear of cars being stolen or inhabitants being mugged. There are no bank robberies, and even stranger is the lack of police presence anywhere. If you do notice police, you don't feel they would have the stamina or sense of urgency to chase any suspect. What you are in most danger of in Kuwait is being involved in a car accident. Young drivers in the world's finest sports cars is a recipe for disaster and the highest cause of death. On every highway there are huge speed warning signs, though, again, Kuwaitis feel that they are driving on their roads that belong to them so there is little chance of them taking advice on how fast and safely they should drive.

In general, Kuwait is a very solution-focused society in the sense that it deals with whatever needs that come up. Though women can now vote, previously it was not a great issue. Kuwaiti women are pampered and educated with every luxury they could ever need, what was there to vote for? There is a great sense of equality between sexes; at the same time, there is still much gender segregation within the society. It is experienced quite naturally with an understanding that men enjoy being men and women enjoy being women which helps to encourage the Islamic principles which are evident everywhere. Islam is about a way of life and Kuwait exudes etiquette and family life. There are mosques everywhere. When the five daily prayer calls,

are sounded out over loud speakers, you hear them in chorus no matter where you standing. This adds to the feeling of safety and security, as you feel that you are in a blessed place.

Perhaps the most comforting thing about Kuwait is that even with all the wealth and luxury you could desire, with a society that oozes confidence and security, people are still people. They may be more relaxed without the pressures of financial stress and household chores. But in truth, Kuwaitis still have to deal with being in relationship with each other and the worries of family life. The best thing about living in Kuwait is that you learn that money doesn't make you happier, it just makes you richer!

### **Teachers and education**

The Kuwaiti government assumed that by building new schools and providing them with the latest technological equipment, importing an established curriculum, hiring teachers, and providing education for all in a non-selective environment, success was ensured.<sup>14</sup> Actually, this method may have been not a bad idea for a country that had no background in education and wanted to build an education system quickly. Unfortunately, this way of approaching education has backfired in some ways. When the government borrowed a foreign curriculum, they also imported other cultures' beliefs and morals. The government tried to overcome these complications by remoulding the imported curriculum to suit the Kuwaiti culture, but the changes it made did not carry much weight. To this day, the English textbooks are entitled *English for the Emirates*. Another problem was that the influence of foreign teachers in the classroom environment sometimes led students to adopt habits and beliefs different from those of their own culture.

Government policy ensures that all Kuwaitis opting to enter the public sector are guaranteed employment, regardless of their education level. This has created a government sector of over-employment. This policy may be abandoned at a later stage, but for now the education system is driven by social demands for general education at ever-higher levels, without any real concern for competitive selection or standards<sup>15</sup>. As there is little regard for selectivity and quality control, large numbers of students progress to undergraduate levels of study. This has caused low outcomes in the sense that "graduates" are not necessarily well qualified. Moreover, this unconstrained and easy access to higher education has created a politically undesirable situation, as 78% of the workforce consists of non-nationals.<sup>16</sup> Even

---

<sup>14</sup> Briks, J.S and Rimmer, J.A. ,1984, *op.cit*, p. 31

<sup>15</sup> The entry requirement for teacher institutions were always and still are the lowest in comparison to all other higher education institutions.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Misnad, S., 1985, *op.cit*.

though there is an institute for commerce and industry, which was founded during the 1950s and which offers diplomas, it is regarded with little interest. To strengthen the appeal of vocational education in a prestige-based society, where a diploma is considered second rate compared to a degree, Kuwait is now trying to improve the image of such education by offering relevant degrees and good wages.

Indeed, the major official policy aim for education in Kuwait is to develop the nationals' ability to replace the non-nationals.<sup>17</sup> A main priority here is to recruit teachers of Kuwaiti nationality by offering very attractive financial packages. Qualified teachers can look forward to high tax-free incomes and unconditional life-long employment. A question arises whether this excessive security and lack of competition may have made teachers "laid back" and poorly motivated to develop their skills and knowledge. Again, it is a common experience in our small society that teachers who achieve postgraduate levels leave school teaching and work either in the university or other educational sectors. As a result, the teachers' image, as this study attempts to investigate, may have been damaged. Teachers may have become less admired than they used to be. These are matters to be investigated.

The position of teachers has created ambiguous emotions towards them, concerning the public perceptions of (what is or what should be) their views on teachers. Birks and Rimmer (1984) claimed that education in Kuwait wins popular approval by its affirmation of faith, and well-educated people are believed to be those who have learnt the word of God and can discipline themselves in accordance with the will of God. Respect is highly valued in such a society, and there is no greater respect than that given to a man of Islamic knowledge and practice.<sup>18</sup> Islamic religion has high respect for teachers; we have the saying, 'teachers are almost prophets'. Al-Ghazzali, who was one of the pioneer Islamic philosophers and educators in the twelfth century, believed that teachers are above all other professions, as they mould humans' minds, while no other professions have that power. Islam was all about learning ways of life. Teachers were the messengers who showed society the purpose and the way of life and living. Teachers were the scholars; they were more respected and looked up to than rulers. They held a powerful rank in the society<sup>19</sup>. Therefore Kuwaiti society, with its Islamic foundations, is in conflict with itself if it views teachers differently.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Birks, J.S and Rimmer, J.A., 1984, *op.cit.*

<sup>19</sup> Al Abrashi (n.d), *Islamic Education and its Philosophers*, Dar Alfekr (in Arabic)

The controversy over teachers' status stretches beyond religion. On the one hand, Kuwaitis are very serious about education and consider it an investment for life. Children are raised without the chance to opt out of education. Parents feel ashamed if their children do not graduate from university, but not all graduates are equal. It is thought that great admiration is given to doctors, engineers, lawyers, and members of other professions, and less to teachers. Consequently, with both recognition for formal education and poor recognition for teachers, Kuwaitis' perceptions of teachers' status may be self-contradictory. The empirical work in this study attempts to investigate the public's ranking of teachers in comparison to other professions.

### **The education system**

The majority of the fieldwork in this study has been done through institutions within the education system. Familiarity with the context of research is imperative.

Today, Kuwait's education system is larger than ever. There are currently close to 500,000 students enrolled in Kuwaiti schools, constituting approximately 30 percent of the population<sup>20</sup>. The literacy rate is 83%, one of the Arab world's highest. This is due to extensive government support for the education system.<sup>21</sup>

The system is centralized, like all other public sectors in Kuwait. It is run from the centre and dominated by the Ministry of Education. The curriculum is extremely conservative. Progressive and child-centred theories have not much place in it.<sup>22</sup> There are 668 public schools in Kuwait; none are mixed gender, which reflects the religious conservatism still prevalent in the society. The structure of the system is 4 years of primary schooling, followed by a basic 4 years which are intermediate (these two stages are compulsory), followed by a further 4 years of secondary education. Options are introduced for vocational training after the intermediate stage.<sup>23</sup> A remarkable point is that all the public schools look alike. Before entering a school you know where the porter and the head teacher's office are, and the layout of the classrooms. Also the number of teachers in each school is quite similar.

Kuwait is a small community; therefore it is usual for teachers to be familiar with each other's family histories and not uncommon for them to be related. This situation gives rise to a somewhat informal, family-orientated ambience in schools. Another feature

---

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Education, Kuwait, The schools, [online]. Available: <http://www.moe.edu.kw/> [25 may 2005]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Alobaid, M, 2001, *Teachers' conceptions of teaching*: MA dissertation, London, Institute of Education

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of education, 2003/04, *The statistics diary, 2003/04*, Planning Department, Environmental Changes Follow-up Supervision.



of Kuwaiti schools is the team of domestic staff employed to be at the beck and call of the teachers. They will bring you tea, clean the classrooms and even go and get you a take-away for lunch! Food is a way of life in the Middle East, and the teachers organize and fund a small buffet for each department daily. Overall, the working conditions of the school are decidedly comfortable, and teachers can enjoy long-term employment with ever-increasing salaries.

Due to the influx of foreign employees settling in Kuwait with their families, alternative forms of schooling, in the foreign mother tongues, became a requirement. According to the statistics for the year 2003/04, there were 154 foreign private educational institutions. They follow their own curriculum, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. In the same year there were also 137 private Arabic schools, which follow the Kuwaiti National Curriculum.<sup>24</sup> Before the first Gulf War, there had been only 15 non-Arabic foreign schools in the country. Demand for a Western education has increased more than three-fold since liberation. According to government educationalists, there is a marked preference among Kuwaitis for a Western education for several reasons. These include the perceived inadequacy of state education, the importance of an English-language education as a preparation for further education overseas and life in general, and the advanced curricula of the non-Arabic foreign schools in Kuwait. Despite comparatively high fees, schools that teach American and English curricula are booming.<sup>25</sup>

**Table 1**

<b>Schools</b>	<b>PUBLIC</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>PRIVATE</b>		<b>Total</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>M/F</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>M/F</b>
No. of teachers	26330	9294	35624	4433	1942	6375
No. of Kuwaiti teachers	19517	3477	22994	10	1	11
No. of teachers in primary level	13135	1692	14827	1994	347	2341
No. of Kuwaiti teachers in primary level	9060	1125	10185	5	-	5
No. of teachers in intermediate level	5075	4150	9225	1085	775	1860
No. of Kuwaiti teachers in intermediate level	3922	1491	5413	1	-	1
No. of teachers in secondary level	4213	3451	7664	758	818	1576
No. of Kuwaiti teachers in secondary level	2932	861	3679	1	1	2

(Kuwait Statistics, 2005/06)

Table 1 shows some statistics regarding the female/male ratios of teachers in Kuwait and the range in the levels of teachers' qualifications; more specifically, they show how the private sector boasts the most qualified teachers. In 2005/06, there are just eleven Kuwaiti teachers in private schools. Private schools hire foreign teachers based on their qualifications. Kuwaiti teachers are distributed randomly around public schools by the ministry, as long as they have a degree. The figures in table 1 justify the approach of this research in focusing only on public schooling, since with only

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

eleven Kuwaitis in the private sector, the association of their teachers with teachers' institutions (which are for Kuwaitis only) could not have been established if the private sector were covered. Also as shown in table 2, the majority of students attending private schools are foreign; only 5% of Kuwaiti students are in the private sector. Particularly, at the secondary level, where school leavers were surveyed for this research, only 2% of Kuwaitis are in the private sector. Therefore to investigate the opinions of the Kuwaiti public, school leavers, and teachers, one must concentrate on the public sector.

**Table 2**

<b>No. of students</b>	<b>PUBLIC</b>	<b>PRIVATE</b>
No. of students	305080	116469
No. of Kuwaiti students	266215	14342
No. of foreign students	38865	102127
No. of Kuwaiti students in kindergarten	38656	2727
No. of Kuwaiti students in primary level	115486	6688
No. of Kuwaiti students in intermediate level	87475	3578
No. of Kuwaiti students in secondary level	24598	1349
Average number in class	30	30,8

(Kuwait Statistics, 2005/06)

**Table 3**

<b>Pubic Schools</b>	
Kindergarten	176
Primary	212
Intermediate	164
Secondary	116
Total	668

There are 668 public schools in Kuwait.<sup>26</sup> Table 3 illustrates the distributions of public schools. With this relatively small numbers of schools, it was realistic to use a quantitative approach to identify the status of teachers through their schools, as it will be explained thoroughly in the methodology chapter.

The qualitative approach, also used in this research, is based on a case study of one of the two teacher education programmes in Kuwait. To understand the status of the teachers and teachers' institutions, it is vital to be knowledgeable about what Kuwait offers in terms of higher education and the background of teacher education institutions.

### **Higher Education in Kuwait**

We have mentioned earlier that the government is eager to educate the people in Kuwait.<sup>27</sup> Higher education is taken for granted by the public. It seems that it is almost compulsory to enter post-secondary education. There are three main paths to obtain higher education. Foreign scholarships are one of the privileges of Kuwaitis. The government has an ambitious foreign scholarship programme, which supports leading Kuwaiti scholars who are accepted in universities in the United States, the

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Education, Kuwait, The schools, [online]. Available: <http://www.moe.edu.kw/> [25 may 2005]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].

<sup>27</sup> Following the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in 1991, the Kuwaiti Government undertook a serious effort to reduce the expatriate population. Public school education, including Kuwait University, is free, but access is restricted for foreign residents.

UK, and other countries. In Kuwait itself, the government supports two major higher educational entities: Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

### ***Kuwait University***

Kuwait University is the main forum for academic education in Kuwait. It is an institution made up of five campuses in Kuwait City. Since its establishment in 1966, the university has grown from just over 400 students to nearly 18,000 men and women, and has expanded from only 31 faculty members to include a number of colleges and departments.<sup>28</sup>

### ***The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET)***

In 1982, the PAAET was established to incorporate the various educational facilities that had been created to meet the need for vocational training in Kuwait. Today, PAAET comprises two sectors: Applied Education, and Training. The Authority is charged with providing and developing a national labour force to meet the development requirements of the nation. It also works towards diversifying Kuwait's national economy by training students for careers beyond the oil industry. The PAAET runs the following colleges: the College of Basic Education, the College of Business Studies, the College of Health Science, and the College of Technological Studies; and the following institutes: the Electricity and Water Institute, the Telecommunication and Navigation Institute, the Industrial Training Institute, the Nursing Institute, the Constructional Training Institute, and the Vocational Training Institute.<sup>29</sup>

### ***Teacher education in Kuwait***

In Kuwait there are two teacher education colleges. One of the colleges is part of Kuwait University, and graduates intermediate and secondary schools teachers; the other is the College of Basic Education, which graduates primary teachers. The latter college is part of the Public Organization of Vocational Education and Training. It is important to note that it is the only higher education organization that separates the genders, as Kuwait University is mixed<sup>30</sup>. Table 4 shows the distribution of student teachers in both colleges.

---

<sup>28</sup> Centre of information systems, Kuwait University. 2006. *Kuwait university in brief*. [online, Available: <http://www.Kuniv.edu/> [ 9 January 2006]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> In 2005, Islamists are enforcing segregation in Kuwait University. The Minister of Justice has said, 'We don't want to impose Islam on the country, we just want to encourage it.'

Table 4

Higher education	Total no. of students	Teacher education students
Kuwait University	18042	3229 (secondary)
The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training	11000	6000 (primary)

(Statistics 2005)

### ***College of Basic Education***

A brief description of this college – a summary of its history, curriculum, and style – is appropriate because it will be the subject of a case study in a later chapter. The reason for choosing this teacher institution for the case study is that I am more familiar with it, since I graduated from there. In addition, evidence emerged that its status was lower than the other college, and this would make my argument clearer.

The College of Basic Education was given its present name during the academic year 1986/87. This was the culmination of a history stretching back to 1949, when extensive efforts began to establish an institution for the training of male and female primary school and kindergarten teachers. These efforts resulted in the opening of teachers' institutes in 1962. These institutes were in operation until 1973, when they were closed, giving way to the newly established Teacher Education Institute (for males and females) which has grown to its present size with only a name change.<sup>31</sup>

The College's objective is to prepare the skilled national cadre needed to teach in the primary and kindergarten schools, and to qualify these cadres in the various specialities required by the Ministry of Education.<sup>32</sup> It offers programmes in the following specialisations: Islamic Education - Arabic Language - Science - Mathematics - Art Education - Physical Education and Sport - Librarianship and Educational Technology - Music - Kindergarten - Home Economics - Interior Design – Electricity. The College operates under the credit hour system, which stipulates that the student has to successfully complete 68 credits in order to graduate. These credits are distributed as follows: sixty credits for general, specialized and practical studies, and eight for in-school field training.<sup>33</sup> The normal period of study is four years (eight semesters). The curriculum is divided into major and minor subjects, with 60% of credits given to Education and Educational Psychology and 40% of credits given to specialist subjects. The Education and educational psychology courses cover child psychology, the psychology of learning, educational

<sup>31</sup> Information and computer centre, PAAET. 2003. [online], Available: [http://www. Paaet.edu.kw](http://www.Paaet.edu.kw) / [11 June 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

development, educational theories, curriculum studies, curriculum research, educational philosophy, and teaching methods. The College's pedagogy is predominantly lecture-based.

Religious families in Kuwait, and Bedouin families, prefer their children to attend a single-gender college and also to work in a single-sex environment. Generally, they prefer their daughters to become teachers, as schools are not mixed unlike other work situations. When the College was first opened, its admission requirements were undemanding; students just had to "pass" high school to be qualified to enrol. The justification for this was that the government needed to replace non-nationals with nationals, as most teachers at that time were non-national. However, according to the supposition of this study, the outcomes may have been unsatisfactory, because it seems probable that students might enrol at the college either because they had low high school grades or as a result of parental pressure for them to attend a single-sex institution.

### **Summary**

The status of teachers is likely to be a mixture of elements and to be determined by various factors. This study aims to address the factors that affect the status of teachers in Kuwait; the uniqueness of the country may have created some specific factors that are not so influential in other societies.

The official educational aim in Kuwait is to educate all people. In this century, access to education is not a luxury any more. High quality education is now a necessity. One essential element to achieve it is to qualify teachers with respectable standards. Yet the government's objective, to nationalise the teaching profession regardless of the quality of its recruits, may reduce teachers' standards, performances and credibility. Moreover, in a country where everybody is educated, with high career expectations, who will choose teaching as a career? And why would they choose teaching?

The problem suggested a vicious circle; the status of teachers, may be affected by the reputed quality of teachers in Kuwait, and the quality of teachers may be affected by the status of the profession. This circle, if it is proved to exist, might be broken by either increasing the status of the teaching profession or by raising the quality of teachers entering the profession. In later chapters, evidence and arguments along these lines will be accumulated.

## Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the relevant literature on the factors that would, or might, be expected to have a significant influence on the status of teachers in Kuwait. Most of the influences to be considered will be ones that are likely to operate in many societies, and to have impacts on the perceptions of Kuwaitis as members of one society among many. There are features that define the profession as a whole – teaching is a mass, children-related, feminised profession or semi-profession<sup>1</sup> – but the impact of these characteristics on teachers' status varies according to the current sociological, cultural, political and economic position of a nation. The literature in this chapter aims to provide a background for comparative references, as well as supporting the framework of the research.

Though I chose my area of research out of a practical concern for the impact of teachers' status on educational quality, my research questions and the main bulk of my fieldwork belong firmly in the social science mode. They address what the status of teachers actually is for different sectors of society: age groups, genders, social groups, students, teachers, student-teachers, parents, non-parents. Therefore, the literature I review through most of this chapter will be from social science, including some theoretical work as well as many international surveys. However, I will return to my original 'concerned teacher and citizen' mode, partly in the case-study in Chapter Seven and more fully in the discussions and recommendations of the final chapter – adopting then what Walsh (1993) identifies as 'evaluative' and 'deliberative' discourses<sup>2</sup>. These discussions will draw upon some important theoretical writings in the 'improvement' literature, by Shulman on the one hand and Hargreaves & Goodson on the other.<sup>3</sup> These will be introduced in the final section of this chapter.

There is no evidence of existing literature on the subject of the status of teachers in Kuwait; I am lonely in the field, and for that reason this study is extremely dependent on fieldwork. However, an international literature on the subject of status, in which the word 'status' is often not explicitly addressed, is drawn on. It has been mentioned in Chapter One that the concept of 'status' is ambiguous as between morally neutral and morally loaded senses, and that both the materialistic and moral elements of the

---

<sup>1</sup> Etzioni, A., 1969, *The semi-professions and their organization: teachers, nurses, social workers*, New York: Free P; London: Collier-Macmillan.

<sup>2</sup> Walsh, P., 1993, *Education and meaning: philosophy in practice*, London, Cassell.

<sup>3</sup> Shulman, 1987, *Knowledge and teaching: foundation of the new reform*, Hargreaves-Goodson, 1996, *Teachers' professional lives: aspiration and actualities*.

profession are parts of the equation for this thesis. Again, the status of teachers is affected by impressions gained by members of the public from their own experiences as children, by the interactions they have with their children's teachers, but also, and importantly, by the image that is conveyed by the media – which, therefore, is also considered in this chapter. The status of a profession is also likely to be relative to that of other professions – so much of the research to be reported will be comparative in this sense.

The chapter, then, reviews a selection of the literature that describes or debates the status of the teaching profession in both the moral and material senses, and provides resources for discussion and consideration in later chapters, including some further illumination of the research questions, the methodological choices, and the design and contents of research instruments. First, it discusses a number of standard issues wherever the status of the teaching profession is discussed, namely, social divisions, gender and feminisation, salaries, the shortage of teachers and demands. Then it refers to the broader concerns of the tension between public accountability and trust and the impact of that tension on status. Finally, it prepares the way for the last chapters by introducing some key items of literature regarding both teachers' professionalism and teacher education.

### SECTION ONE: 'SCIENTIFIC' LITERATURE

This section seeks to understand and theorise the status of teachers as an issue with no orientation towards deliberation and action, but as something worth knowing and understanding in its own right. However, its 'scientific' framework will support the final evaluative and deliberative stage of my research by making what it discovers about teacher status in Kuwait available for that stage, but also, as Walsh describes it, by standing behind its more provisional detachment with its own special brand of fascination (1993).<sup>4</sup>

The literature reviewed in this section will soon provide evidence, specifically, of the social diversity *within Kuwaiti culture*. Division into two social groups and gender discrimination are features that characterize this society, and in later chapters this study investigates, intensively, the effect of those factors on the professional status of teachers. We need to ask, do the different social groups and genders have different perceptions of the profession and different motives for entering it?

---

<sup>4</sup> Walsh, P., 1993, *op cit*.

The survey then moves to literature specifically relating to factors with some direct or indirect impact on teacher status *internationally*, in particular: gender issues (the feminisation of the teaching profession), salaries, shortage of teachers, differences in pedagogy (e.g. class *versus* subject teaching in primary school), media, trust and accountability. Of course, such factors, though internationally familiar, tend to be nationally context-specific – which means they provide a ground for comparisons with the findings of this study.

First, however, this section will offer some pointers from a more general level of social theory.

### **Kuwait: some pointers from social theory**

Social theories are metaphors for societies; they help to clarify norms and values. They are instruments by which people can examine societies and cultures.<sup>5</sup> Taking certain social theories and relating them to Kuwaiti society provides some insights into the culture and recent social changes.

In Kuwait the ethical theory of objectivism<sup>6</sup> (the theory that moral or ethical values are objective) holds sway and plays a vital role in the society. Islam may have contributed to enhancing a sense of having perfect criteria to judge by. When comparing ideals to reality, Kuwaitis tend to espouse their particular values strongly, and therefore to be critical, judgmental and intolerant.<sup>7</sup> (However, we shall see that these strong values vary as between the two main social groups, despite their shared Islamic values. Within each of the groups, the value system is clear and objective, according to their traditional criteria. Yet even the religion conveys different values to the two social groups.)

This characteristic of Kuwaitis throws light on the form of modernisation in Kuwait. Usually, broad social trends, for example, shifts in population, urbanisation, industrialisation and bureaucratisation, lead to significant social changes. These

---

<sup>5</sup> Beilharz, P. ,1992, Fabianism and Marxism: *Sociology and Political Economy*. *Australian Journal Of Political Science*, 27, 137-146.

<sup>6</sup> The most obvious version of objectivism is Platonism, named after the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, which is the theory that values are literally objects. In some world, Plato believed, Goodness, Justice, Truth, Beauty, etc. exist as objects. They never change and they are the standard by which all things should be judged. Plato developed this theory partly in response to relativism. The opposite of objectivism is relativism or subjectivism: the theory that ethics is fundamentally subjective, perhaps a matter of feeling.

<sup>7</sup> Here, as elsewhere as in some other such general statements, I am drawing on my lived and fallible experience of my own people.



trends have been associated with the process whereby a society moves from traditional, less developed modes of production to technologically advanced industrial modes. Population growth and urbanisation have a significant impact on other aspects of society, like social structure, institutions and culture. In Kuwait after 1961, the discovery of oil and the massive economic boom enforced social change, yet the contrast between the traditional and the modern remained substantial. Kuwaitis adopted modernization on the surface, but absolutes like social laws were impenetrable to it. In the post-modern era, when people tend to judge things against each other without having the criteria of ideals to judge by (parallel with relativism), Islam still insists that those criteria are unchangeable. The standards are clear, and the rules have been set; therefore, there is no room for change. By contrast, social theory emphasises that all societies are involved in a process of social change<sup>8</sup>, and that societies are characterised by the rate, processes, and directions of change in them. In some societies, the change may be so incremental that the members of the society are hardly aware of it. People living in very traditional societies would be in this category.<sup>9</sup>

In this connection, Preston (2000) has pointed out that a key sign of the magnitude of recent changes is found in the ways people have continued talking about the experience of loss. Expressions such 'the death of God', 'the demise of the family', and the 'loss of community' reflect the long-standing feelings of loss that go along with modernisation.<sup>10</sup> For Kuwaitis, however, the Islamic resistance to such changes has so far prevailed, so that no major sense of loss has accompanied modernisation.

However, the 'superficial' changes have been dramatic and may add up to some 'loss of a sense of reality'. The reference here is to the 'fairy-tale' aspects associated with great wealth effortlessly accumulated, such as the scorning of consumer items recognised elsewhere as high value (e.g. Mercedes cars of the less expensive kind), or the unthinking disrespect for foreign workers. Symbolic Interactionist theory may help to explain such phenomena by its emphasis that social interaction is symbolic in nature and that people 'construct' their social reality.<sup>11</sup> This means that social reality is different from natural reality because it is symbolic and socially constructed. This theory argues that people give meaning to events and objects, and that most people in a society agree about these meanings. It becomes irrelevant what is 'really'

---

<sup>8</sup> Social change is a term used within sociology and applies to modifications in social relationships or culture.

<sup>9</sup> Preston, C., 2000, *Society and culture inservice*, Nagle College.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Berger, P. and Luckmann, T., 1967, *Social construction of reality*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

happening, because the participants are engaged in interpretive processes and it is these that shape their perceptions of the world.<sup>12</sup>

A totally different kind of social theory, that of Marxism, holds that social order is maintained to suit the vested interests of powerful groups, and as the interests of these groups change, so does society. Change is therefore ongoing, until a crisis point is reached and a revolutionary transformation occurs (Marx focused specifically on class conflict).<sup>13</sup> Kuwait is a monarchy with powerful leaders who determine the trend of the society; the media and the education system are controlled by them. However, the people of Kuwait are satisfied with their leaders, who are seen not as 'Islamist' or fundamentalist, but as moderate and pro-modernisation. Also, any change of the government may lead to extremes, and Kuwaitis are aware of this fact. Kuwait is unlikely to experience a revolution within the immediate future!

This does not mean that significant change cannot occur, however. Marxists also believe that the social order is maintained through socialisation and education, and the inspiration for this thesis comes from seeing education as an instrument of change. Social theory allows that the actions of individuals, organisations and social movements have an impact on society and may become the catalysts for wider social change. However, the actions of individuals occur within the context of the culture, institutions and power structures inherited from the past, and usually, for these individuals to effect dramatic social change, the society itself must be ripe for change.<sup>14</sup>

### **Socio-cultural groups**

To understand the status of teachers in Kuwait, social analysis is necessary, as a group division of a particular kind plays a crucial role in Kuwaiti society. Categorizing the society into distinct classes is a tolerable activity within the culture; it is not unusual for people to talk about class or religious divisions at work or social events, and prejudice is acceptable and justifiable in the culture. It is the norm in elections that people vote for representatives of the same social group as themselves<sup>15</sup> and also it is normal that marriages across classes are not acceptable. Thus, it is

---

<sup>12</sup> Polanyi, K., 1973, *The Great Transformation*, Octagon Books, New York.

<sup>13</sup> Hindess, B., 1977, *The Concept of Class in Marxist Theory and Marxist Politics*, London: Lawrence and Wishart.

<sup>14</sup> Preston, C., 2000, *op.cit.*

<sup>15</sup> Social class refers to the ranking of people into a hierarchy within a culture. The idea of social class entered the English lexicon about the 1770's, with no specific originator. Many sociologists and historians see 'higher' classes as controlling subordinate classes. This ranking may be legal, as in former Indian castes, or abstract.

important to discuss the status of teachers in Kuwait with reference to social divisions. The status of any profession can be defined in part from the status of the people entering the profession. A profession can be stigmatised by the poor status of the associated social group. Also, the status of any given profession may be viewed differently by different social groups. In this section we will seek to understand the most relevant aspects of the system of social diversity in Kuwait.

Various schools of sociology differ over which social traits are significant enough to define a class (education, genealogy, income, net worth, occupation, ownership, political power, reputation, prestige, manners). The relative importance and the definition of membership in a particular class differ greatly over time and between societies, particularly in those that have a legal differentiation of groups of people by birth or occupation. In the well-known example of socio-economic class, some scholars view societies as stratified into a hierarchical system based on economic status, wealth, or income.<sup>16</sup> For Marxism, 'class consciousness' is present when a group of people with shared material conditions come to a positive consciousness of their social position. This is seen as the process of a 'class in itself' moving in the direction of becoming a 'class for itself,' a collective agent that changes history rather than being a victim of the historical process.<sup>17</sup> When sociologists, more generally, speak of 'class', they usually mean economically-based classes in modern or pre-modern society. Modern usage of the word 'class' outside Marxism generally considers only the relative wealth of individuals or social groups. By contrast, this study will focus on non-economic factors, which are associated with traditions and manners.<sup>18</sup> Kuwaiti society is divided into 'Bedouin' and 'Civils'.<sup>19</sup> At least in terms of educational impact, that is the main distinction in the society, and it is based on tribes.<sup>20</sup> This distinction was one of the controlled variables throughout all four surveys undertaken for this research (including the survey in the College of Basic

---

<sup>16</sup> Weber, M., 1958, *Class, status and party, essays in sociology*, New York, Oxford University Press.

<sup>17</sup> Abercrombie, N., 2000, *The penguin dictionary of sociology*, Penguin (4 ed.). London, UK: Penguin Books.

<sup>18</sup> Manners are like laws in that they codify or set a standard for human behaviour, and unlike laws in that there is no formal system for punishing transgressions. They are a kind of norm.

<sup>19</sup> This is a translation of the Arabic word used.

<sup>20</sup> There is another distinction, based on religion (Shi'a and Sunni). Seventy-five percent of Kuwaitis are Sunni Muslims, and 25% are Shi'a Muslims. Also there are legal distinctions among Kuwaitis, according to the type of Kuwaiti nationality they hold (first class, second class, seventh class etc...) not to mention the massive legal and sociological distinction between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis. I do not believe that the Sunni and Shi'a distinctions have an impact on the status of either teachers or teacher education, and even if it did, it would be impossible to be identified or discussed. The impact of nationality is not as closely relevant as the 'social group', and with no foreigners in teacher education, the link between the status and teacher education could not been established.

Education). Therefore it is necessary now to look at the cultural and political influences on the two main social groups.

#### *Traditional and modern*

Kuwait was never a colony, and the Kuwaitis have always been free to manage their affairs among themselves as they see fit and develop their unique cultural characteristics in their own way. The Kuwaitis of the pre-oil era had a highly developed social organization based on the family, which provided the economic and political support necessary for survival, where individuals gave unquestioning service and loyalty to their groups. These social networks are still extremely strong, and provide the basis of social groups among Kuwaitis today.<sup>21</sup> This applies to both the main groups under discussion here. They are strong because they are family-based. Kuwaitis often refer to 'inner' Kuwait, with its more liberal and cosmopolitan atmosphere, and 'outer' Kuwait, in the suburbs, where conservative Bedouin and tribal influences are stronger.<sup>22</sup> The former of these culturally different groups are called 'Civils' or 'Urbans', and the latter 'Bedouin' or 'Suburbans'. While the Civils settled in Kuwait City long ago, most of the Bedouin tribes settled there only in the past decades, as oil drove a strong process of urbanization across the Gulf countries. In most cases, the Kuwaiti state granted citizenship to these tribes in an effort to counterbalance the demographic and electoral weight of the Civils, long the core of opposition to the ruling family in Kuwait.<sup>23</sup> Bedouin today make up slightly less than half of the population.

'Civil' Kuwaitis have been, and are, more exposed to the Western world than 'Bedouin'. Families from the city tend to travel abroad, and most of them speak English as a second language. They are less male chauvinist (at least in their own eyes) than the 'Bedouin'. Many Civil females are allowed to study abroad, and most can work in a mixed-gender environment. By contrast, Bedouin have the more conservative traditions and culture. The gender difference is more emphasized. Females get married at a younger age, and they must be covered. Also it is preferable, if not absolutely necessary, for females to work in a gender-divided environment. Bedouin are less exposed to the Western world, and only a small minority speak English. Civil women dress in Western clothes; Bedouin women are likely to wear a short black veil that covers the entire face, and a head-to-toe silky

---

<sup>21</sup> Al-Mubailesh, k., *A complete guide to Kuwait on your desk*, [online], Available: <http://www.kuwaitiah.net/religion1.html> [7 April 2005]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Encarta. 2002. *Encyclopedia: Kuwait Geography, Demographics, and Resources*. [online], Available: [http://www.countriesquest.com/middle\\_east/kuwait/the\\_people\\_of\\_kuwait.htm](http://www.countriesquest.com/middle_east/kuwait/the_people_of_kuwait.htm) [5 March 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

black cloak.<sup>24</sup> Nor is this culture in retreat. Taheri cites a French diplomat who recently described the Bedouin as follows:

*'The bedouinisation trend is reflected in lifestyle patterns. More and more people are decorating their luxury villas, built on Western designs, with furniture fit for traditional tents in the deserts. The chic de chic is to squat on the floor, smoke a hubble-bubble, and eat boiled rice and lamb stew with one's hands. The desert, once identified as a symbol of backwardness, is regaining part of its mystique for a growing number of Kuwaitis.'*<sup>25</sup>

In the last election, Bedouin candidates won 26 of the 50 seats in the national assembly and showed their force in several other constituencies. The competition between Bedouin and Civils is becoming an important theme of Kuwaiti politics. That competition, encouraged in indirect ways by the government, has not yet developed into open conflict. But many Civils are beginning to feel apprehensive about the impact of bedouinisation on national life, especially in social and cultural terms.<sup>26</sup> Taheri quotes Muhammad al-Rumaihi, one of Kuwait's leading intellectuals: *'The Bedouin discourse is largely conservative and anti-reform.....it is also more introvert at a time that Kuwait needs to open itself further to the outside world.'*; and a senior Kuwaiti official: *'The Bedouin want for parliament to be nothing but a council of tribes'*. They fear change, and wish society to be frozen in time. The Bedouin blame the Civils for most of Kuwait's misfortunes since independence in 1960. They claim that the Civils brought in such pernicious ideas as pan-Arabism, socialism, and, eventually, Islamic fundamentalism to Kuwait, thus plunging it into currents it could not control.

Four decades ago, before bedouinisation began, Kuwait was one of the most open of Arab societies. It was the only Arab state with a constitution that mentioned democracy as its basis, and which provided for an elected parliament. It was also unique among the Arabs in having no political prisoners, no opposition in exile, and certainly no political executions. It is unlikely that the retreat of the Civils and the advance of the Bedouin will alter those basic features of Kuwaiti national life. But Taheri observes that these developments could slow democratic development and social liberalization. More importantly, this Iranian critic argues, the bedouinisation trend could stop the emergence of the individual as the basic constituent element of society, replacing it with certain social groups. Like many, he observes that some Bedouin themselves see the growing influence of the tribes as a natural

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Taheri, A. (2003). *Dimming the Kuwait city lights*, Kuwait return to their tribal roots. National Review, p.1

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

consequence of the greater political and social awareness prompted by their access to modern education provided by the state. 'If we couldn't compete with the Civils in the past it was because we lacked the political skills,' said a Bedouin candidate in the recent election. Taheri adds, however, that critics claim that the Bedouin have no particular attachment to Kuwait and are motivated by narrow self-interest.<sup>27</sup> The Bedouin have been accused of political opportunism because of their shifting alliances, first with the government, then with the Islamists, and now again with the ruling family. Kristianasen, writing in a French journal, quotes Dr Shamlan al-Essa, head of the political science department at Kuwait University: 'The surprise was that they [the Bedouin] started to get educated, and the government couldn't control them any more.'<sup>28</sup>

The phenomenon of bedouinisation is encouraged by ruling elites that wish to counter the threat of Islamism but also fear democratisation. Arab history is full of instances in which the desert has swallowed great, prosperous and sophisticated cities. It is unlikely that that part of Arab history will repeat itself in actual physical terms. But the advance of desert traditionalism could extinguish a few lights in many Arab cities, at least for a while.<sup>29</sup>

The differences between Bedouin and other Kuwaitis are important for this thesis. It is a working assumption that there are likely to be some significant differences between suburbans (Bedouin) and urbans (Civils) in their views of teachers and teaching. Urban families are thought to have the best education, and also known to espouse city values such as openness, diversity, and liberal social mores. On the other hand, *'Bedouins feel a need to return to what they believe is the source of their identity: the desert.'* as a French diplomat said.<sup>30</sup>

It is generally supposed that there are significantly more suburbans (Bedouin) than urbans (Civils) in the teacher training colleges, especially the College of Basic Education (primary training). This would suggest that there are more in the teaching profession, at any rate in primary schools. However, there are no official data on this

---

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Kristiansen, W., 2003, *The Islamists, the biggest parliamentary force in Kuwait, are worried. Some of their members were involved in the attacks of 11 September; more have had their fund-raising activities questioned and even shut down. Will they stay in this unwelcome and uncomfortable spotlight?* Mondediplo. p.3.

<sup>29</sup> Cited in Taheri, A., 2003, *op.cit.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

breakdown since any group official distinction based on tribes or religion is politically unacceptable; Kuwaitis can talk about it, yet they cannot write about it<sup>31</sup>.

### **Gender issues and status**

The gender distinction is also very significant for this thesis and plays a vital role in the sampling used for the surveys in this study. It is even more than usually important because the concept of gender equality has not been developed in Kuwait. Traditions and religion emphasize gender differences and prevent modernization in this area. There is a difference in the expectations of both genders, in the sense of their expected responsibilities, duties, and achievements. Therefore different genders may have different views on career perspectives and status. This sub-section highlights the degree of explicit gender inequality.

Before the discovery of oil, few Kuwaiti women received more than a basic religious education. Al-Mughni, in an important recent study, described the position of women in those days:

*'Those from wealthy households were confined to their courtyards, in a section of the house without windows so their voices could not be heard from the outside. Women from more modest households fared slightly better: some worked as midwives, marriage brokers, dressmakers and religion teachers who used their homes as schools'.*<sup>32</sup>

In public, however, all women had to cover themselves in long black cloaks and veil their faces with thick black cloths.

The economic expansion created a demand for an educated workforce, and the state made education available to all Kuwaiti citizens. The educated woman became a symbol of modernity. She removed the traditional black veil, enrolled in higher education and competed with men in the labour market. By the 1990s, Kuwaiti women made up 35 percent of the workforce. Despite these strides, Kuwaiti women continue to be legally defined as family members, whose rights and responsibilities are circumscribed by their roles as mothers, wives and daughters.<sup>33</sup>

As Al-Mughni noted, after the first Gulf War the Kuwaiti women's movement brought the voting issue to the forefront, providing the ground for an alliance between Islamist

---

<sup>31</sup> Throughout the chapters I will be referring to those two culturally different groups as 'Urbans' and 'Suburbans' as they are more acceptable terms.

<sup>32</sup> Al-Mughni, H., 2001, *Women in Kuwait: All roads lead to the franchise, The Politics of Gender* London: Saqi Books. p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

and liberal women activists. Suffragists invoked the heroic roles of women under Iraqi occupation, the sacrifices of female martyrs and wartime hardships as justifications for gaining political rights. But whatever the sacrifices made and stereotypes challenged, the all-male parliament remained reluctant to extend to women full citizenship rights, theoretically guaranteed by the constitution.<sup>34</sup> In November 1999, an Islamist coalition succeeded in defeating a decree issued by Kuwait's ruler, Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmed al-Sabah, which would have granted women the right to run for office and vote in parliamentary and municipal elections.

Opponents appeal to narrow interpretations of religious law to justify the denial of citizenship rights to women. But the real impetus for their actions, Al Mughni argues, is changing gender roles combined with a deep anxiety over a sluggish economy. Climbing unemployment among Kuwaiti youth has raised questions about the identity of males as breadwinners. Hence, throughout the 1990s, Islamists and their Bedouin supporters used different rationales to confine women to their traditional identities. They blamed rising divorce rates, child delinquency and declining family values on women's departure from their traditional roles. Thus Islamists managed to force parliament to pass a law allowing working mothers early retirement in an attempt to make more public-sector jobs available to Kuwaiti men.<sup>35</sup>

In May 1999, while parliament was suspended, the emir decreed that women were finally to get the vote and be allowed to stand as MPs. The voting age was to be reduced from 21 to 18. Famously, parliament failed to ratify the decree. The liberal opposition proposed a new draft law. That, too, failed by two votes. Paradoxically this reverse was the result of the democratisation process introduced by the ruling family.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, Kuwaiti women were not willing to give up their gains, nor to end their movement for political rights. As Al-Mughni noted, following the defeat of the decree, female activists filed six court cases against the Ministry of the Interior for not allowing them to register to vote, a move intended to force a ruling on the constitutionality of the Election Law.

---

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Kristianasen, W., 2003, *op.cit.*



The eventual success of this campaigning, the enfranchisement of women in May 2005, solved the most serious problem concerning Kuwaiti elections, and other reforms could help, at least to some degree, in moving Kuwait farther toward democracy. Nevertheless, traditions will certainly not allow women the same freedom as men have; they will be controlled and limited in how they dress or where they may appear in public.

Returning to my research topic, with this obvious gender distinction in the society the status of teachers is likely to be affected to the extent that the teaching profession is dominated by females. Moreover, females and males among the public, teachers, school leavers, and student teachers may have different perceptions from each other of teaching as a profession and of the status of teachers. Throughout the fieldwork of this study the gender variable will be controlled and analysed. It would be surprising if both genders perceived the status of teachers in the same ways.

### **Teachers' status in a feminised profession**

According to statistics for 2004, there was an equal distribution of genders among teachers (Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis) at intermediate and secondary levels in Kuwait, but at the primary level the number of female teachers (67%) was twice the number of male teachers (33%). The main reason for this imbalance in a generally gender-divided education system is that, following early theorists who believed that women's essential nurturing qualities make them more suited to support roles and the 'semi-professions'<sup>37</sup>, Kuwait introduced women staff to boys' primary schools from 1994. Would this affect the status difference between primary and secondary teachers? If the nationality factor is added, the number of Kuwaiti male teachers is much less than the number of Kuwaiti female teachers. In primary, intermediate, and secondary schools Kuwaiti male teachers are 28%, 19%, and 20% of the total respectively [see Chapter One, table (1)]. Therefore the feminisation of the profession is perceptible for Kuwaitis, though its pattern may be different from that in other countries. This subsection discusses the international scale of female entry into the teaching profession and its relation to the low prestige of the profession. It attempts to portray an international picture of the extent of feminisation in primary and secondary education, and to examine the importance of this impact on teachers' professional status.

---

<sup>37</sup> Etzioni, A., 1969, *The semi-professions and their organization: teachers, nurses, social workers*, New York: Free P; London: Collier-Macmillan.

In 1977, Kanter suggested that a critical mass of women in a workforce is required to influence organisational change and end the token status of women. On the other hand, as more women enter a profession, there is the danger of an 'equity paradox' where the profession loses its value.<sup>38</sup> Almost twenty years later, Apple noted that scholars were raising the possibility that much of the perceived low status of teaching is attributable not only to the relative weakness of children, but also to the inferior status of women. Like nursing and social work, teaching had been burdened with an image of social housekeeping, identified as an extension of the domestic sphere and vulnerable to loss of discretion, autonomy, and status. Historians and economists have begun to explore connections between feminization and explicit initiatives, such as installing 'teacher-proof' curricula to 'deskill' teaching by limiting occasions for teachers to use their professional judgment and skills. Scholarship focusing on the relationship is admittedly speculative and tentative, Apple observed, but the hypothesis is provocative enough to merit further research.<sup>39</sup>

By that time, Apple could draw on the work of Grumet (1988), and others such as Nicholson (1980), Lather (1987) and earlier work by Apple himself<sup>40</sup>. These works note that the rise in the number of women employed in the teaching profession in the West was related not only to the great demand for public school teachers in the late 1800s<sup>41</sup>, but also to a lack of funds to pay that growing body of employees. From this perspective, Grumet develops a significant critique of the feminisation of teaching by showing that its inception was synonymous with the economic exploitation of women workers who filled teaching positions. Due to gendered work relations, it was acceptable in the late 19th century to pay women two-thirds the salary of a male teaching colleague. In 1853, Catherine Beecher, a political figure in the 19<sup>th</sup> century United States, wrote:

*'Women can afford to teach for one half, or even less the salary which men would ask, because the female teacher has only herself; she does not look*

---

<sup>38</sup> Kanter, R.M., 1977, *Men and women of this corporation*, Cited by Morly, L., 1997, Change and equity in higher education, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 18 (2).

<sup>39</sup> Apple, M., 1995, *Education and power*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, New York: Routledge.

<sup>40</sup> Apple, M., 1986, *Teacher and texts: a political economy of class gender relation in education*, London: Routledge.

<sup>41</sup> Religious and social theory about child rearing underwent a substantial change during the early nineteenth century, particularly among the moderate, affluent, and liberal Christian sects in USA. Male-dominated pedagogy had assumed that children were *History of Teachers and Teaching*, p. 1369-1373. Michigan State University).sinful and possessed an inherent inclination toward evil that had to be controlled with force and intimidation, at least until they were old enough to experience a genuine conversion. 'Christian nurture,' as the new doctrine came to be called, increasingly rejected assumptions about innate sinfulness and encouraged a view of children as capable of moving gradually toward the conversion experience that signified salvation (Sedlak, M. J., 2006).

*forward to the duty of supporting a family...nor has she the ambition to amass a fortune'*<sup>42</sup>

Thus, Beecher joined forces with school administrators who applied the argument of financial constraints to justify hiring women to teach, and paying them less for equal work, or more work than that of their male counterparts.

The current situation of women in Kuwait is very similar to Grumet's description of Western women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Islam emphasises that men should support the family, and the support of a female in Kuwait is the responsibility of her father or husband. The devaluation of women's economic worth is demonstrated by the fact that men get paid more than women, not in basic salary but in that housing and child care benefits are given only to men. This applies to all government-sector professions, including teaching.

Studies have shown that females perceive the profession as an opportunity to combine employment and family responsibilities. For example, two studies of teacher supply in England found links between family responsibilities and the likelihood of being a teacher. Dolton and Makepeace (1993) found that teachers were more likely to be in work than non-teachers with the same family commitment, and Court, Morris, Reilly and Williams (1995) that married or cohabiting graduates were almost twice as likely as others to go into teaching, regardless of gender.<sup>43</sup>

For a sense of the prevalence and extent of feminisation, we can refer to an International Labour Organisation [ILO] report by Cathy Wylie (2000), which examined the feminisation of the teaching workforce in primary and secondary education in OECD countries from 1980 to 1995. Women made up more than half of the primary teachers in most OECD countries in 1980. The report demonstrates that by 1995 just over half the 19 countries for which information was available had a primary teaching force that was predominantly female, over 70 per cent.<sup>44</sup> In secondary education, the proportions of women were much lower, overall, than in primary education. However, the *increase* in feminisation was more marked in secondary education, perhaps because of its lower starting base. 55 per cent and

---

<sup>42</sup> Cited in Grumet, M.R., 1988, *Bitter milk: woman and teaching*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts. p.35.

<sup>43</sup> Dolton, P.J., and Makepeace, G.H., 1993, *Female labour force participation and the choice of occupation: The supply of teachers*, European Economic Review 37, pp. 1393-1411. And Court, G., et al., 1995, *Teachers: Recruitment and the labour market*. Brighton: Institute for Employment Studies.

<sup>44</sup> Wylie, C., 2000, *Trends in feminisation of the teaching profession in OECD countries 1980-95*, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, International Labour Office, Geneva.

above counted as a high level of feminisation in 1980, while by 1995 women were more than 50 per cent in two-thirds of the OECD countries for which information was available.<sup>45</sup>

Although, as we have seen, women now dominate primary teaching in terms of numbers in all the OECD countries (except Turkey), they have yet to gain headships in proportionate numbers. In the late 1980s, the variation was from 3 per cent in Japan to 45 per cent in France.<sup>46</sup> However, comparison with other occupations would possibly show that teaching appears to provide women with more opportunity than those to gain management positions.<sup>47</sup> The fact that as one moves up in the educational hierarchy one will find considerably fewer women teachers only further confirms that high-status knowledge is a masculine domain.<sup>48</sup>

Under Kuwait's centralised government, the headships are equally divided between males and females (due to school segregation). However, the frustrating possibility is, that male teachers no longer see headship as the career opportunity that it once was, and that in turn reduces the prestige of headship.

Though opportunities for women have widened over the last 20 to 30 years in many countries, with the growth of the service sector and their achievement of higher qualifications, women have yet to achieve equal pay in many professions, and the 'glass ceiling' continues to limit career advancement.<sup>49</sup> However, teaching actually has better status and better pay rates than other occupations readily available or thought of as suitable for women; it draws on socially valued strengths, and, relative to other occupations, has somewhat more potential for career advancement.<sup>50</sup> Also, it is important in the end to seek to separate in the modern world the two issues that have become entangled in the issue of 'feminisation', the issue of to what extent teaching (or the teaching of some ages) is particularly suited to women, and the issue of securing proper prestige for an occupation in which women are the majority.

---

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> OECD, 1998, citing the European Commission's report, *Key data on education in the European Union*). pp. 117-118.

<sup>47</sup> In 1980, only 5 per cent of primary headships in New Zealand were taken by women; by 1998, the proportion was 35 per cent, and that of secondary principals was 23 %. In England, 57 per cent of primary head teachers were women, and 27 per cent of secondary heads. One study of principal appointments found that during the 1980s and early 1990s, men were selected for just over one-third of primary headships; by 1993-96, they were selected for 24 per cent, and by 1998, for less than 12 per cent, close to their proportions in the primary teaching force.

<sup>48</sup> Grumet, M.R. *op.cit.* p. 39.

<sup>49</sup> Etzioni, *op cit.*

<sup>50</sup> Brady, K. ,1998, Teaching as women's work? Teaching and Teachers' Work: A Publication on Professional and Pedagogical Issues, 6 (4): 1-12. Adelaide: Flinders University of South Australia.

Gilligan has argued that women occupy a different moral discourse from men, one which privileges empathy, compassion and relationship,<sup>51</sup> but if this means that they have special strengths as teachers, it need not mean they should be paid less than male teachers.

This research, as indicated earlier, looks at the status of the teaching profession as seen from different gender perspectives. In the survey of the public, these are investigated by controlling the sample and analysing male and female views on the status of teachers separately. In the three other surveys (teachers, school leavers, and students teachers) as well as controlling gender in the construction of the sample, and the analysis of data, and making a systematic check for gender effects, there are in-depth investigations of both genders' perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages of choosing the teaching profession rather than other career options. The interviews with the Minister of Education also draw attention to this matter. These investigations of the gender perspective sometimes spill over into the neighbouring feminisation issue, in particular when considering differences of status between primary and secondary teaching.

### **Salaries and status**

We move now to consider the impact of teachers' wages on their status. When the teaching package (the status of teachers can be derived in part from the extent to which this package appeals to the public) is compared with other professionals' packages, teaching does not stand at the top. Teaching is seen in most countries as a secure job that does not pay well.

According to a report of 1999, teachers' salaries in OECD countries were relatively high when compared with those of other full-time salary workers<sup>52</sup>, but teachers with 15 years of experience earned less than the average for other university graduates in other highly-skilled occupations.<sup>53</sup> A teacher with 15 years experience earned an average of US\$27,525 annually<sup>54</sup>, which, the report says, was significantly less than equally qualified professionals in other fields at the time.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Gilligan, C., 1982, *In a Different voice: psychological theory and women's development*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP.

<sup>52</sup> With the exceptions of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Sweden, where primary teachers' pay is comparatively low.

<sup>53</sup> With the exceptions of Australia, France and Switzerland.

<sup>54</sup> Ranging from a low of US\$8,252 in Hungary to a high of US\$43,627 in Switzerland.

<sup>55</sup> OECD, 1999, *The future of female-dominated occupations*, Paris, p. 268, Cited by Wylie, C. (2000). *Principal appointments: Report for the New Zealand Principals' Federation*, Wellington.

Court, Morris, Reilly and Williams (1995) cite four studies between 1979 and 1993 showing relationships between salary levels and the choice of teaching as a career. Of particular note is the study by Zabalza, made in 1979, using 1963-71 data, which showed that men were more responsive to increases in earnings than women; a 10 per cent increase in average teacher salaries led to a 24 per cent increase in the number of male teachers, but only a 3 per cent increase in female teachers. The study also showed that career progression and pay levels played a role in the decision to become a teacher, as did unemployment rates.<sup>56</sup> It would be interesting to replicate this study now, twenty-five years later. (Most of my surveys will touch on it, without being a full-scale replication.)

NEA has produced a report on the status of the American public school teacher every five years since 1961, providing a chronicle of the teaching profession over four decades.<sup>57</sup> The survey sought to identify the reasons for teachers not intending to remain in teaching until retirement. 37 per cent, the largest segment of the sample, cited low salaries. Minority teachers (50%), male teachers (43%), and teachers under 30 (47%) were most likely to claim low pay as the reason why they would not stay in teaching.<sup>58</sup>

On the other hand, a study in the United Kingdom in 1992, related to newly qualified graduates, found that neither salary progression nor the unemployment rate significantly affected the proportion of graduates entering teaching, whether male or female. But relative starting salaries remained a significant influence. The findings suggested that salary progression might have become less important than previously, because of changes in the labour market which have changed expectations of a 'job for life'. The study estimated that a 1 per cent fall in relative teacher starting salaries would result in a drop of 4 per cent in the relative numbers of graduates entering teaching. Unlike the NEA report, no difference between men and women was found.<sup>59</sup> However, if salary variables and graduate unemployment levels are held constant, women were more likely to enter teaching than men, indicating that pay was only one of the factors which influenced their decision. Other factors

---

<sup>56</sup> Court, G., et al., 1995, *Teachers: Recruitment and the labour market*. Brighton: Institute for Employment Studies.

<sup>57</sup> The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 2.7 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become teachers.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Reference not found.

that positively influenced the choice of teaching were marital or cohabiting status, and degree subject, which itself was influenced by gender.<sup>60</sup>

An OECD report demonstrated that between 1990 and 1996 teacher salaries were often stable or increased in real terms, but the increases were generally slower than growth in GDP per capita.<sup>61</sup> It suggested that the low increases in teachers' salaries might be partly responsible for the lack of sufficient new recruits in some countries. Nonetheless, there is often a trade-off made by governments to maximize the numbers of recruits to the teaching profession. In Peru, for example, teachers' low salaries were partly compensated by a relatively light teaching load of about 648 hours annually. In the Philippines, teachers were paid more (about \$US 10,640 annually), but worked an average of 1,176 hours per year and taught classes of over 50 students.<sup>62</sup>

In Kuwait the government attempts to attract people into the teaching profession by relatively high salaries (about \$US 35000 annually and tax free) and a relatively light teaching load averaging about 380 hours annually. The impact of this will be investigated in this study, not only by considering the numbers of new recruits or of school leavers who are considering entering the profession, but also by assessing the quality of those who are in, or considering entering, the profession. In all the surveys, I sought to identify the quality level, academic abilities (from school leavers' and student teachers' annual examination results), and qualifications (from the teachers' questionnaire). Also, the motivation of teachers will be identified, by considering responses to direct or indirect questions in all surveys. If salaries turn out to be the main attraction, if teaching is being chosen mainly for materialistic motives, then good salaries could have an overall negative influence on quality and commitment, and therefore in determining the status of teachers.

### **Teacher supply and status**

In a study by UNESCO and the Geneva-based International Labour Office, the UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, John Daniel, observed that

*'The teacher shortages we are beginning to see everywhere have various causes, but a common factor seems to be the diminishing status of teachers*

---

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> OECD, 1999, *The future of female-dominated occupations*, Paris, p. 268, Cited by Wylie, C. (2000). *Principal appointments: Report for the New Zealand Principals' Federation*, Wellington

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

*and a concomitant decline in working conditions in many countries. As a result, we are seeing qualified teachers quit the profession for other work, and potential recruits looking upon teaching as a last resort'.<sup>63</sup>*

Daniel's assumption here, that teacher supply to some degree reflects the status of teachers, seems reasonable. This report showed that constant population growth and declining working conditions are creating a severe global shortage of teachers, and warned of a possible slide in education standards. The study was based on the most extensive set of data ever gathered on teachers. It looked at how many teachers there are, who they are and what training they have received, their working conditions and how much their governments invest in them.<sup>64</sup> It clearly links the status of teachers with the quality of education. In countries where teachers enjoy relatively good employment conditions, education tends to be given high priority and is of higher quality.

The study found that the rise in numbers of school-aged children had outpaced the growth in the number of teachers worldwide in the 1990s, packing classrooms in some developing countries with as many as 100 students per teacher. The data show that a concerted effort has been made in many developing regions, where demand for more teachers is highest, and where two thirds of the world's 59 million teachers live and work. Nonetheless, the ratio of primary pupils to teachers remains three times higher in the least developed countries than in developed ones. The report points out that average values of the order of 70:1 mean that classes of more than 100 children are not unusual. This compares with an average of 16 pupils for every teacher in the developed countries.

By these standards, Kuwait, where the student teacher ratio is 10.3<sup>65</sup> (though it is often classified a developing country), certainly seems to have a sufficient number of teachers. Indeed in Kuwait the phrase 'shortage of teachers' has a distinctive meaning, as it means shortage of *Kuwaiti* teachers, and, in addition, shortage of *quality* teachers. We shall therefore move on to consider the quality of the supply, and to compare some international data and Kuwaiti data on this.

---

<sup>63</sup> ILO-UNESCO, 2002, *More children, fewer teachers: study sees global teacher shortage causing decline in quality education*, press release 2002-67.

<sup>64</sup> The Statistical Profile of the Teaching Profession draws on information from various sources including the European Network for Information in Education (Eurydice), International Labour Office (ILO), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE) and its Institute for Statistics (UIS).

<sup>65</sup> Ministry of Education, Kuwait Statistics 2003/04.



The UNESCO-ILO Report was pessimistic about quality. Teachers in developing countries tend to be very young and inexperienced. In many of these nations more than 30 per cent of teachers are under 30 years of age. Although most teachers have the national academic qualifications to do their job, these qualifications vary widely, and in many of the least developed countries the majority of primary teachers have, at most, a lower secondary qualification, and frequently no professional training at all.<sup>66</sup> Developed countries are also facing a difficult future. The teaching force as a whole is ageing, and governments are battling to attract young people to the profession. In Germany and Sweden, for example, more than 70 per cent of primary teachers are over 40. This means that the majority of teachers received their initial training 15 to 20 years ago, but the knowledge and skills needed by students have changed dramatically since then. The report noted that in-service training was offered in many countries, but questioned its quality and relevance.<sup>67</sup>

Nevertheless, in the USA (Washington, D.C.) a national survey in 2003 showed that the average public school teacher has 15 years of classroom experience, and more than half of the teachers (56 percent) hold a master's degree or 6-year diploma. Nearly one-quarter (23 percent) had begun full-time teaching within five years.<sup>68</sup>

In England, the government have had a different problem with teachers' supply. In 2001 a paper by Alan Smithers and Pamela Robinson reported on a national survey in England and Wales of teachers' resignations.<sup>69</sup> The statistics for turnover among new teachers were startling; 20 percent of all new recruits left the classroom within three years. In urban districts, the numbers were worse: close to 50 percent of newcomers flee the profession during their first five years of teaching. The survey suggests that 70,500 teachers in total leave their school during the year.

So far, there appears to be an international problem with teacher supply, either with the shortage of teachers, or with the quality of teachers, or, in some cases, with both. However, the problems with teacher supply in Kuwait have a special character of their own. Since the government imports teachers in order to provide a sufficient supply, the shortage of teachers in the obvious sense is solvable. However, we recall

---

<sup>66</sup> This is the case for almost 50 per cent of Uganda's teachers, 40 per cent of Togo's teachers and some 35 per cent of teachers in Cape Verde. UNESCO-ILO, 2002, ILO/02/45. *op.cit.*

<sup>67</sup> ILO-UNESCO, 2002, *op.cit.*

<sup>68</sup> NEA Research, August 2003, *American Public School Teacher 2000-2001*, National Education Association, Great Public School for Every Child, Washington, D.C.

<sup>69</sup> Smithers, A. and Robinson, P., 2001, *Teachers leaving*, London: NUT; Liverpool: CEER, University of Liverpool.

that 'shortage of teachers' has a more specific meaning in Kuwait: 'shortage of *Kuwaiti* teachers'. There has been an ongoing campaign to increase the proportion of nationals in the workforce – 'to nationalise the system' – mainly for political reasons (especially after the first Gulf war). As we saw in Chapter One, the campaign has succeeded in attracting female Kuwaitis; yet male Kuwaitis are still reluctant to enter the profession.

Another, and perhaps larger, issue is that to the extent that it is successful the campaign may be replacing the good and highly qualified foreign teachers with lower-quality Kuwaiti teachers. This study attempts to investigate the impact of this government policy on perceptions of the quality of teachers, and consequently, on the status of teachers. The quality issue is not explicitly addressed in other studies, or in official documents discussing reforms. However, two recent policy shifts are suggestive of some loss of teachers' credibility. In these the government has seemed to retreat from certain policies that would have assumed a well-qualified workforce. A school self-evaluation initiative was introduced in 1995 but was almost immediately judged to be unsuccessful and annulled.<sup>70</sup> Again, in 2005, 'the American (credit) system', where teachers had full control over the curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment and which had existed since 1983, was annulled.<sup>71</sup> It seems that whenever the ministry has given some professional authority to teachers it has been later withdrawn.

### **The Public, the Media, and Teachers' Status**

There are general misconceptions in public impressions of teachers. These misconceptions are created by personal experiences and by the media, and sometimes reinforced by the professional literature. Swetman has argued that 'without personal knowledge about schools and teachers, people form their attitudes based on fictional media representations'.<sup>72</sup> This section will examine some causes and effects of the public attitude towards the teaching profession.

The public attitude towards teachers comes to a large extent from having completed twelve years of 'teacher experiencing' during their own school experience; these internalised models of teaching – which may of course vary according to the 'eye of the beholder' – remain firmly entrenched. Elam and Gallup (1990) pointed out that

---

<sup>70</sup> Ministry of Education, 1995-96 report, Department of Research, Kuwait.

<sup>71</sup> Ministry of Education, 2004-05 report, Department of Research, Kuwait.

<sup>72</sup> Swetman, L.A., 1992, Media Distortion of the Teacher Image, *The Clearinghouse*, 66 (1):30-32.

according to their public poll in 1990 in the US, the more first-hand knowledge one has about the public schools (that is, knowledge that does not come from the media), the better one likes and respects them. But not everyone has extended, or recent, first-hand knowledge. For example, grandparents' more distant memories may distort their picture of what is happening in schools. Standards are often seen by the older generation to be dropping, even if they are not. This generation, too, may have little comprehension, for example, of the impact of, Information Technology on schools and schooling.<sup>73</sup> But even those, like parents of school-going children, who have current contacts with schools may have misconceptions, at any rate about the wider educational system - misconceptions that are fed by media presentations of teachers. Internationally, the media reinforce misconceptions about the lives and work of teachers in many ways, for example through films, television, and novels, where the language and metaphors perpetuate the image of schools as authoritarian institutions using transmission models of learning and focusing upon knowledge acquisition.<sup>74</sup> Of course, the media portrayals of other professions may be just as unrealistic as their portrayal of teachers, but

*'The fictional spin these other professional characters are given makes them human but effective at their jobs and the respectable heroes of the story in most episodes'.<sup>75</sup>*

Supporting this view, Kaplan wrote concerning television series:

*'Unlike the lawyers of 'LA Law', the surgeons of 'MASH' or the police officers in any crime series, the people who work in schools do not spend much time at their real jobs. The entire K-12 enterprise (especially secondary schools) comes through as less professional and less attractive than comparable endeavours'.<sup>76</sup>*

Many TV dramas reflect dysfunctional relationships between teachers and students and stereotyped dress and behaviour. The actual working conditions under which teachers and students are expected to operate are rarely seen on television. This misleading image of teacher and schooling does not illuminate the complexity of the profession.<sup>77</sup> This is not just a Western media attitude; Arabic films also stereotype teachers. They caricature teachers as strict people with glasses and rulers, and as very badly paid. The image of teaching, therefore, can be detached from the wider

---

<sup>73</sup> Elam, S. & Gallup, A., 1990, The 22nd Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes towards their Public Schools, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 72(1): 51.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* p.4

<sup>76</sup> Kaplan, G., 1990, *TV's Version of Education*, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 71(5), K1-K12. p. 7.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

constraints on actual teaching and, at best, it is represented as an essence, isolated from reality and de-contextualised in terms of social relationships and practices.<sup>78</sup>

Baker, discussing the role of the media in the UK in 2000, suggested that

*'The profession has to be active in re-constructing its own image. Having gone from the 'hatchet job' done on it during the seventies and eighties to a position now where it is in danger of being 'cuddled to death'- both scenarios position the profession in a passive role and this needs to change'.<sup>79</sup>*

In many countries, indeed, the teaching profession may need to develop a media strategy of its own and build effective local media contacts which help manage the way the image is represented.<sup>80</sup>

Further reinforcement of misleading images of teachers is found in much of the professional literature. The image of teaching which is often presented is romanticised and stereotypical. Simpson cites as typical of this level of representation the work of McNergney and Herbert (1995)<sup>81</sup> and Murnane et al. (1991)<sup>82</sup> who portray teachers as informed, industrious 'miracle workers'. Teaching is portrayed as an occupation where knowledge, skills and appropriate attitudes are not only essential to perform the job but are possessed by all teachers. Such a representation is clearly idealised and perpetuates the stereotyping which characterises theorising and researching in the area.<sup>83</sup> Depicting teachers as being universally well versed in their content, excellent communicators and motivators with a life-long commitment to learning, clearly over-looks the variations found among teachers and does little to describe accurately the complexity of teaching. Students in teacher education, too, may cling to this idealised image and it may even undermine their willingness to take seriously and to apply in their practice the theoretical aspects of their programmes of teacher education.<sup>84</sup>

In democratic nations the media, including the press, may play a vital role in enhancing or damaging the status of teachers. UK newspapers, on a daily basis,

---

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Baker, M., 2000, *Does education get the media it deserve? Role of the media*, London: Institute of Education, University of London, p. 17

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> McNergney, R.F. and Herbert, J.M., 1995, *Foundation of Education: The challenge of professional practice*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Boston: Ally & Bacon, cited by Simpson, T., 2002. *op cit*

<sup>82</sup> Murnane, R.J., et al., 1991, *Who Will Teach? Policies that matter*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, cited by Simpson, T., 2002.

<sup>83</sup> Simpson, T., 2002, *The public perception of teachers: A different projection*, QUT Kelvin Grove Campus.

<sup>84</sup> Hargreaves, A., 1994, *Changing teachers, changing times: teachers' work and culture in the post modern age*, London: Cassell.

have the freedom to be objective, or sometimes excessively critical, in regard to teachers and the education system. Kuwait's government, however, owns and controls all radio and television stations in the country. The Information Ministry periodically issues directives to Internet service providers to filter decadent or 'unacceptable' information and some political content.<sup>85</sup> Though there are several independently owned daily newspapers that publish in Arabic and English, as formal press censorship ended in 1992, and though today newspapers argue vigorously about most public issues, certain subjects, such as the ruling family, are considered beyond public criticism.<sup>86</sup> The public are aware of these facts, therefore the media may be perceived as not always credible or spirited in their analyses. However, the government tolerates umbrella organizations with strong ideological tendencies that air many different views. Most of these organizations are either traditional and Islamic or liberal, and within them there are further divisions and factions. Many leading merchant families use the country's chamber of commerce to play a strong political role. Even without political parties, affiliations are widely known. The parliament is open to the public, and anyone can go and listen. The general point here is that in such a small society information is often spread informally from person to person; to some extent the public are their own press. Again, around 35% percent of the population are in school, which increases the extent to which the public perception of the status of teachers is likely to be formed by first-hand information: by the quality of teachers who are actually teaching their children. In the surveys made for this study, the impact of the media on the status of teachers is understood through examining the public's perceptions.

### **Trust, accountability and teachers' status**

Teaching is a profession that the public may agree is truly necessary and important in the society while still not according it a high status. There is often a disparity between its acknowledged contribution to that community and its status in the community.<sup>87</sup> To what extent is this 'inconsistency' widespread, particularly in a comparative context? Let us start by looking at the degree of trust (which forms a moral component of teachers' status) people have for teachers.

---

<sup>85</sup> Encarta, 2002, *Encyclopedia: Kuwait Geography, Demographics, and Resources*. [Online], Available: [http://www.countriesquest.com/middle\\_east/kuwait/the\\_people\\_of\\_kuwait.htm](http://www.countriesquest.com/middle_east/kuwait/the_people_of_kuwait.htm) [5 March 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> Abbott-Chapman, J., *et al.*, 1991, *Students' images of teaching: Factors affecting recruitment*, Commissioned Report 8: National Board of Employment, Education and Training; Centre for education, University of Tasmania; Tasmanian Teachers' Federation

The Harris poll 62, 1998 in the U.S, by Humphrey Taylor, investigated who was trusted the most to tell the truth from a list of people in different professions and occupations. This poll used virtually identical questions to those in an earlier survey in Great Britain conducted by Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) in 1997. The results show that in general Americans are more trusting than the British. One exception is trust in TV newscasters ('newsreaders' in Britain). In the U.S., only 44% of adults but in Britain fully 74% say they generally trust newsreaders to tell them the truth. Apart from this, Americans are much more likely than the British to trust civil servants (70% vs. 36% in Britain), journalists (43% vs. 15%), business leaders (49% vs. 29%), scientists (79% vs. 63%) and ordinary men and women (71% vs. 56%). However, there was very little difference in the level of public trust in teachers – as may be seen from Table 1.<sup>88</sup>

**Table 1: Professions and Trust**

<i>Whom do the public trust</i>	<i>U.S. (Harris)</i>	<i>Great Britain (MORI)</i>	<i>US Minus G.B.</i>
Teachers	86	83	+3
Clergymen or priests	85	71	+14
Doctors	83	86	-3
Scientists	79	63	+16
Judges	79	72	+7
Professors	77	70	+7
Police officers	75	61	+14
Ordinary man or woman	71	56	+15
Civil servants	70	36	+34
Pollsters	55	55	-
(The) President	54	N/A	N/A
Business leaders	49	29	+20
Members of Congress	46	N/A	N/A
TV newscasters	44	74	-30
Journalists	43	15	+28
Trade union leaders	37	27	+10

As the table shows, the general public in the US and in Great Britain trust teachers more than many more prestigious professions. Why do people trust teachers most? If we analyse the US data, we find a similarity between teachers (86%), priests (85%) civil servants (70%), and ordinary people (71%). A possible argument is that in the US, people assume that the ordinary person has no reason to lie and the same goes for teachers and civil servants. Their lack of power and authority makes them less corrupt than other groups, as power and corruption go together. In Great Britain, too, there is a similarity between teachers (83%) and priests (71%) where lack of power also is the case (perhaps more so after the introduction of the National Curriculum).

<sup>88</sup> This poll was conducted by telephone, using a nationwide cross-section of 1,013 adults. In Great Britain, MORI interviewed 997 adults. Figures for age, sex, race, education, number of adults and number of voice/telephone lines in the household were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in these populations. In theory, with a sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Approaching the results from a different angle, in the US teachers (86%) and doctors (83%), and in Great Britain teachers (83%) and doctors (86%) are the most trusted to tell the truth. Teachers and doctors have the reputation of serving the common good. It is hard to be cynical and untruthful when one is a member of the altruistic professions, where selfish motives do not drive the work.

In Australia, Morgan Gallup conducted polls on ratings for honesty and ethical standards for occupations at intervals between 1984 and 1996, involving a longer list of occupations.<sup>89</sup>

**Table 2: Professions and Ethical Standards**

<b>How occupations rate for ethical standards and honesty</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>
Nurses	-	-	86	86	87
Pharmacists	-	79	78	79	80
Doctors	64	69	66	69	72
<b>School Teachers</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>68</b>
Dentists	62	66	60	65	65
Engineers	53	58	57	59	56
Police	53	53	56	59	55
Tertiary lecturers	51	55	54	52	50
Accountants	48	47	42	45	46
Bank Managers	61	44	37	39	37
Lawyers	44	34	30	32	29
Business Executives	22	17	17	17	17
Federal MPs	19	10	10	9	13
Press journalists	11	7	8	8	7
Cars Salesmen	3	3	3	3	3

Teachers ranked fourth in the professions after nurses, pharmacists, and doctors, and teaching was the only profession to improve its rating significantly, by 12% from 1976. It is interesting to consider also a survey conducted in 1991 of the public's confidence in public agencies (Table 3).<sup>90</sup> The *Sydney Morning Herald* suggested that the reason for the comparatively high standards of trust in the education system was not the efficiency or outstanding performance, nor the quality of work done by teachers working with students:

*'The relatively high level of public trust in the education system may be explained by the absence of those two corrupting influences, power and money, one or both of which come into play in the other institutions'.<sup>91</sup>*

<sup>89</sup> Ministerial Advisory Council on the Quality of Teaching (MACQT), 2005. *The standing of teachers and teaching*.

<sup>90</sup> Morgan Poll, 1996, Finding No. 2893, Published in The Bulletin, April 30.

<sup>91</sup> Eltis, K., August 1997, Paper prepared for the Australian College of Education, University of Sydney, p.37.

**Table 3: Systems and Confidence**

<i>How much confidence do you have in:</i> <sup>92</sup>	<i>A great deal %</i>	<i>A fair amount %</i>	<i>Total C1.1/2%</i>	<i>Not much%</i>	<i>None%</i>	<i>Don't know%</i>
<b>The education system</b>	8	54	62	28	4	6
<b>The legal system</b>	6	46	52	36	9	3
<b>The banks</b>	6	46	52	37	9	2
<b>The media</b>	3	36	42	48	12	1
<b>The political system</b>	3	33	36	49	13	2

Incidentally, the older the group responding, the less the confidence shown in the education system, and the argument is advanced that older Australians come to believe that standards in schools have declined in recent years – we have noted in the previous section that this may apply also to the older generation in Kuwait – while younger people with children at school are more in touch with the system and can, therefore, presumably, better judge its performance. Other research has also shown that the further respondents are removed from schools, the less likely they are to have a realistic view of what occurs in the classroom, It stands to reason that when members of the community or care-givers become involved in a school setting and are able to work closely alongside teachers, they soon become impressed by the professionalism and the sheer dedication that is demonstrated by teachers.<sup>93</sup>

Some writers have attempted to analyse the complexity of the work undertaken within the professions. Interest in this particular area has come about because of the perception that the work of teachers has become simplified, and standardised in some ways as a result of central planning and direction by strong administrators. Abbott-Chapman pointed out that it was not unreasonable to assert, however, that, in fact, teaching has become more complex and that the process of devolution in other ways has seen more responsibility being given to teachers and school administrators who require additional time and personnel resources.<sup>94</sup>

The first report to emerge from the *Assisting Schools with School Renewal Project* (Eltis and Laws, 1993), following the introduction of strategic and management plans in the participating schools, concluded that teachers in the project schools freely acknowledged that opportunities were there in ways that had not existed before for greater teacher and community participation in setting directions and establishing priorities. What was seen was an enhanced professional role for teachers, which was

<sup>92</sup> All figures rounded to the nearest whole number.

<sup>93</sup> Abbott-Chapman, J., *et al.*, (1991), *op.cit.*

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*



much appreciated. Perhaps this is a good foundation on which to build a more positive image for schools.<sup>95</sup>

These surveys in the U.S., UK, and Australia strongly suggest that, whatever teachers' status may be in the narrow morally-neutral sense, public trust in teachers might be high in Kuwait also. The surveys of teachers, school-leavers and student teachers addressed this question directly (but the public survey did so, only indirectly).

## SECTION TWO: 'DELIBERATIVE' LITERATURE

This section focuses on articulating and proposing possible ways for teachers to achieve higher professional status and on a selection of the 'improvement' literature that discusses this matter, bearing in mind Walsh's point that such 'deliberative discourse' needs to interact with 'utopian discourse' to be effective. On the assumption that the fieldwork will expose some problems with teacher status in Kuwait, it will invite some consideration of how to address those problems practically, of the concern which provides an ultimate direction and focus for the research fieldwork. The section starts by discussing what constitutes a profession and ways to develop teachers' professional status. In particular, it reviews the Hargreaves-Goodson taxonomy of professionalism. Then, drawing on Shulman, the chapter moves to discuss ways to conceptualise teachers' knowledge as an approach to enhance teachers' status. Finally, it discusses teacher education and its possible impact on the status of the teaching profession.

### Teachers' profession and status

*'What once could have been seen as exceptional devotion to duty has now become seen as normal practice'.<sup>96</sup>*

Breslin indicated teachers' struggle with their status:

*'Being a teacher means maintaining a strong belief in what you do, balanced against a perception that whatever you do may not enhance your status. This requires bifocal vision: one focus on the short-term achievements of your pupils, the other on the long-term needs of yourself and your profession. Maybe no other group in our society faces this dilemma with little extrinsic reward'.<sup>97</sup>*

---

<sup>95</sup> Eltis, K.J. & Laws, K.J., 1993, *the Development of Strategic Management Plans*. Sydney: NSW Department of School education, Metropolitan West region.

<sup>96</sup> OECD, 1990:31 referring to conditions across OECD member countries.

<sup>97</sup> Breslin, T., Conference Report, Transforming Teacher Status, GTC, 11 September 2001. p33.

Abbott-Chapman and others described the role of teachers as a submissive one, accountable to superiors rather than making independent judgments about their work. The professional scope of teachers' activities is heavily circumscribed by the conditions and terms of their employment, which do not match those of more prestigious professions. Yet teachers carry major responsibilities for students across a vast age range and at crucial times in their lives – a fact of which there is insufficient public recognition.<sup>98</sup>

In investigating the standing of teachers, we should look, if briefly, to history. Castle (1969) in his book entitled *The Teacher* described the position of teachers throughout history. Teachers have appeared in several roles: poets, prophets, philosophers, schoolmasters, and university lecturers.<sup>99</sup> Analysing the often strong position of teachers in ancient times suggests some hypotheses. Inaccessible knowledge, or knowledge and skills that are not easily available to the public, are highly valued. The scribes with their ability to write, the prophets with their claims of knowledge about God, the Greek philosophers, and the Roman teachers of practical skills, all shared a common talent or knowledge that distinguished them from their people. Also composing poetry was (and is) a talent that could not be obtained by everyone. Greek teachers and their poetry influenced the hearts and the minds of their nation. They were not just teachers; they both made the curriculum and taught it. In many cultures, teaching religion was perceived as serving God. These teachers were honoured as messengers from God. Their knowledge was needed and respected. Such teachers in some cultures were politically powerful and influential, and in others – for example, those Asian countries influenced by Confucius – were highly admired and respected if usually poor.

Later, when education became accessible to the public, literacy was not a 'mystery' any more. The status of individuals with literary knowledge was reduced. The status of teachers fluctuated according to the scarcity of their special knowledge. Primary teachers, with their more basic and more widely available knowledge of literacy and numeracy, generally had a lower status than secondary teachers, who were perceived to have more advanced knowledge. Nowadays, what kind of knowledge could be considered unobtainable? What does a teacher know that an ordinary person does not? What makes teaching rank as a profession?

---

<sup>98</sup> Abbott-Chapman, J., Hull, R., Maclean, R., McCann, H., & Wyld, C., 1991, *Students' Images of Teaching - Factors Affecting Recruitment* (Commissioned Report 8): National Board of Employment, Education and Training; Centre for education, University of Tasmania; Tasmanian Teachers' Federation

<sup>99</sup> Castle, E.B., 1969, *The teacher*. Oxford: OUP.

Traditional accounts of professionalism refer to a body of specialist knowledge and expertise, or a skill based on theoretical knowledge. Therefore, to constitute a profession there must be provision of education and training. Also, every profession must have an organization. Accordingly, can teachers be considered as professionals?

Hargreaves and Goodson have debated teachers' professionalism by reviewing five different, often overlapping, discourses which carry different implications of what it means for a teacher to be a professional: classical, flexible, extended, practical, and complex discourses.<sup>100</sup> These will be discussed below, though, different conclusions (with Kuwait in mind) will be reached than the one to which the authors tend. Assuming that seeking professionalisation shows merely a desire to enhance professional status, prestige, and recognition, it is still important to address the common ground shared by professions that have reached this high status – at least for Kuwait.

**Classical professionalism** has traditionally rested, the authors observe, on the typical claims to professional status of law and medicine. In seeking professional status, it is the claims of these highly ranked, publicly recognizable and largely masculine professions that teachers have usually tried to emulate. These professions have been characterized as having a specialized knowledge base or a shared technical culture, a strong service ethic with a commitment to meeting clients' needs, and self-regulated, collegial control. In comparison with the classical professions, teaching is only 'partially professionalised' at best. There is a little evidence of a technical culture shared by teachers, since their isolation in the workplace discourages teachers from sharing or developing the technical aspect of their work.<sup>101</sup> In regard to subject knowledge, Hargreaves argued elsewhere that secondary school teachers might claim a semblance of technical expertise derived from the knowledge base of their subject matter, although school subject knowledge has often lagged seriously behind the university disciplines, but primary teachers are stripped of any subject pretensions. They have a few shared technical conceptions and perhaps some perhaps specialised language concerning child development and pedagogy, but their language is often indistinguishable from ordinary language.

---

<sup>100</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *Teachers' professional lives: aspiration and actualities*, London, Falmer Press, pp 1-27.

<sup>101</sup> Lortie, D., 1975, *School teachers*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press. p.23.

Teachers use practical experience, not scientific theory as the foundation of their work.<sup>102</sup>

Soder noted that teaching cannot achieve the status of medicine by following the medical model of professionalisation, since the probability of teachers developing technology as advanced as that of medicine is very low.<sup>103</sup> Hargreaves and Goodson add that the predominately masculine professions, such as law and medicine claim scientific certainty, which in educational fields is very limited.<sup>104</sup> Breslin observes that teachers often have the sense, commonly experienced by football team managers, that everyone in the crowd thinks that they can do the job better. Teachers must acquire a different kind of professional identity. It is hard to emulate the classical professions because teaching lacks their esoteric knowledge; actually teaching is as much about giving away knowledge as having it.<sup>105</sup>

Hargreaves even argued that when schools and teacher-education entered the university milieu, they may have entered into a 'devil's bargain': their mission changed from concerns with matters central to the practice of schooling towards issues of status passage through more conventional university scholarship. He noted that

*'Bodies of knowledge [for teacher education] were created with two functions: the creation of a corpus of expert knowledge with which to instruct trainee teachers; secondly, bodies of knowledge were designed to maximize status within the university milieu'.<sup>106</sup>*

Waller in 1932 already noted the strategy implied here:

*'It is sometimes proposed to remedy the low standing of the teaching profession by making teaching a real profession. Let it be known that teaching is a difficult art, and one that requires years of expensive training, say those who argue for this remedy, and the people will esteem their teachers accordingly'.<sup>107</sup>*

I am aware that this strategy now seems very much dated and questionable to some, yet this thesis will consider ways to enhance teachers' professionalism and status in a country that has not entered the era of post modernity. A deliberate attempt to adopt the strategy described by Waller might be applicable, and effective in enhancing the status of teachers in such a country.

---

<sup>102</sup> Hargreaves, A., 1984, Experience counts, theory doesn't: How teachers talk about their work. *Sociology of Education*. 57, 244-254.

<sup>103</sup> Soder, R., 1990, *The rhetoric of teacher professionalisation*, San Francisco, Josser-Bass.

<sup>104</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., (1996), *op cit*.

<sup>105</sup> Breslin, T., 2001, *op.cit*.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*. p. 8

<sup>107</sup> Waller, 1932, p. 64 cited by Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *op cit*.

Shifting from classical professionalism to **flexible professionalism**, Hargreaves and Goodson explained this second discourse of professionalism as resulting from:

*A strategy to develop a sense of a shared professional community and culture of collaboration, among particular groups of teachers in particular schools or subject areas where sharing takes place and dialogue about teaching and teaching development can begin.*<sup>108</sup>

Talbert and McLaughlin believe that if this collaboration operates appropriately and builds a shared technical culture, community by community, it will lead to a significant enhancement of teacher professionalism.<sup>109</sup> In other words, situated certainty is the proposed basis for the professionalisation of the teaching profession. The situated certainties among local professional communities of teachers are made up of common agreements and certainties about professional knowledge and standards of practice that teachers seem able to achieve, department by department, or school by school.<sup>110</sup> However, Hargreaves and Goodson argue convincingly that pursuing professionalisation merely through situated certainties poses significant problems within a fragmented community of teachers; it runs the risk of fracturing them in ways that make the possibility of commitment to broader professional goals more remote.<sup>111</sup> Moreover, Hargreaves and Dawe argued that teachers' culture has often been controlled by educational bureaucracies, locking teachers into overformal manufactured collegiality in the shape of compulsory peer coaching or obscure procedures of school development planning that are contrary to self-directed professionalism.<sup>112</sup> With teachers exchanging resources and 'tricks of the trade' rather than studying practice together, the culture of collaboration is likely to be fragile.<sup>113</sup> The question raised here is: would this kind of professionalism enhance the status of teachers, or reduce it to a trade that does not need more than in-service training?

For Hargreaves and Goodson, **practical professionalism** is a third discourse, which tries to derive status from the practical knowledge and judgment that teachers have of their own work, which is shaped by a teacher's purpose and values. Here

---

<sup>108</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *op cit*.

<sup>109</sup> Talbert and McLaughlin, 1994, cited by Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *Teachers' professional lives: aspiration and actualities*, London, Falmer Press.

<sup>110</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *op cit*, p.10.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>112</sup> Hargreaves, A., & Dawe, R., 1990, 'Paths of Professional Development: Contrived Collegiality, Collaborative Culture and the Case of Peer Coaching'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 6, 227-241.

<sup>113</sup> Little, J.W., 1990, The persistence of privacy: Autonomy and initiative in teachers' professional relationship, *Teachers College Record*, 91.

teachers' experience becomes a source of a valid theory.<sup>114</sup> This model deconstructs scientific knowledge as the basis for teacher professionalisation. It connects the practical reflection of teachers to broader social agendas of equity and emancipation, making practical reflection social and critical as well as personal and local.<sup>115</sup> A powerful extension of this model is the notion of reflective practice, where the heart of professionalism is the capacity to exercise discretionary judgment in situations of unavoidable uncertainty. Within the actual practice of teaching, all teachers embody reflection and thoughtful judgment. Teachers can learn to articulate and share their reflection explicitly, and reflection is the heart of being a professional.

Hargreaves and Goodson accept that teacher education and development should be constructed in ways that make explicit reflection more feasible and more thorough.<sup>116</sup> However, they point out that this model can be embraced too exclusively and excessively, and by restructuring education inequitably it can narrow the teachers' task to delivering the goals of the restructured system technically, competently but unquestioningly. Then it would threaten to move the profession into a period of deprofessionalisation.<sup>117</sup> Also, Weber and Mitchell argued that this model offers an extremely personalized and romantic form of professionalisation. Not all teachers' practical knowledge is educationally beneficial; some comes from their previous experience as students or from current standards of teaching within their culture – both of which may offer serious barriers to improvement in teaching.<sup>118</sup> Applying this model in a carefree old-fashioned society like Kuwait could allow teachers to continue unquestioningly in traditional beliefs on teaching, rather than directing them to a more progressive educational paradigm. It can be argued, also, that while 'reflective practice' is obviously better than 'unthinking practice', it would not be enough by itself for Kuwait; a suitable knowledge and theory base would also be needed. In addition, of course, reflective practice is itself an art that has to be taught and learnt industriously; it does not come automatically from teaching practice.

In **extended professionalism** teachers derive their skills from mediation between experience and theory. High value is placed on theoretical as well as practical education experiences. Consequently, teachers' activities are seen as more rational than intuitive; the model calls for collaboration, peer coaching, teamwork,

---

<sup>114</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *op cit*.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *op cit*.

<sup>118</sup> Weber, S., & Mitchell, 1996, Using drawings to interrogate professional identity and the popular culture of teaching.

partnership, mentoring, professional development, contractual relationships, and a focus on outcomes.<sup>119</sup> Hargreaves and Goodson argue that this model increases teachers' collaboration and skills, but that their critical engagement with goals and purposes has largely been excluded.<sup>120</sup>

**Complex professionalism** hinges on the argument that professions should be judged by the complexity of the tasks which comprise them, and that teaching is characterized by high degrees of complexity. So, Devaney and Sykes argue that teachers must be knowledgeable, experienced, thoughtful, committed, and energetic workers to be able to handle the complexity of their work. They argue that the culture of professionalism must be built in schools and school districts.<sup>121</sup> Rowan argues that an increase of complexity in the teaching profession helps increase teachers' prestige and occupational earnings: the more complex, the more professionalised. He notes that many proposals for schools reforms suggest that teachers' work might become more complex by creating mentor roles for teachers, implementing site-based management and changing school organization to allow teachers to have more personalized relationships with students. However, in practice most of these reform efforts have affected the work of teachers only marginally.<sup>122</sup>

Hargreaves and Goodson believe that this model may be the vital key to improving teachers' professionalism and, also, that it constitutes the strongest case for prolonging the period of professional preparation. But, they warn, if this model is not implemented properly, it will basically become a synonym for teacher exploitation, which leads to burnout.<sup>123</sup> (Burnout, however, is not an immediate danger for Kuwaiti teachers, with an average of 12 working hours a week).

Reflection on these models of professionalism suggests that political and governmental forces play a vital part in directing types of professionalism. For example, under centralized governments it could be hard to achieve flexible professionalism. And extended and complex professionalism may only lead to more paper work for teachers. Classical professionalism may seem superficial on the one hand, and unachievable in education on the other hand, yet enhancing teachers'

---

<sup>119</sup> Hargreaves, D. H., 1994, The new professionalism: the synthesis of professional and institutional development. *Teaching and teacher Education*, 10 (4), 423-438.

<sup>120</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., (1996), *op cit*.

<sup>121</sup> Devaney, K., & Sykes, G., 1988, *Making the case for professionalism*, in Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *Teachers' Professional Lives: Aspiration and Actualities*, London, Falmer Press.

<sup>122</sup> Rowan, B., 1994, Comparing teachers' work with work in other occupations: Notes on the professional status of teaching. *Education Researcher*, 23 (6), 4-17, 21.

<sup>123</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., (1996), *op cit*.

subject knowledge and thereby improving the image of teachers' work may be the shortest and surest way to increase the status of the teaching profession in small centralized societies.

Classical professions such as medicine may be over-valued in Kuwait; within the high percentage of university graduates, particular prestige is given to the 'super' graduates that have highly scientific or otherwise esoteric knowledge. It may be said that teachers under these circumstances have almost no chance of developing a knowledge base that can correspond with that of the classical professions. However, one way to make the teaching profession measure up to the classical professions is to categorize and codify their practical and experiential knowledge in technical and scientific terms. This neo-classical attempt to redefine a knowledge base for teaching, it is argued, should consist of codified knowledge, skills, understanding and technology, of ethics and dispositions, and of collective responsibility, as well as means of representing all these<sup>124</sup>.

Lee Shulman links teachers' confidence and belief about the nature of school subjects with their 'subject matter knowledge' and with their teaching approaches. For example, if teachers believe that mathematics is essentially a matter of rules and routines, which merely have to be remembered, then their own approach to unfamiliar problems will be constrained. If teachers lack confidence in their knowledge, then they may avoid risky situations in the classroom and be inhibited in responding to unexpected situations. They might also seek refuge by opting to teach younger children, with whom they feel less daunted. On the other hand, teachers who lack confidence in their subject knowledge may be inclined to prepare their lessons carefully and to access a wide range of resource material. 'Subject matter knowledge' is the amount and organization of the knowledge in itself in the mind of the teacher, and Shulman divides it into various categories. **Substantive knowledge** includes the key facts, concepts, principle and explanatory frameworks of any discipline. **Syntactic knowledge** includes the rule of evidence and proof within that discipline. **Pedagogical content knowledge** includes the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations and demonstrations, as well as ways of representing the subject which make it comprehensible to others, it also includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult. Finally,

---

<sup>124</sup> Shulman, L.S. ,1987, Knowledge and teaching: foundation of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57 (1), 1-22.



**curriculum knowledge** is knowledge of the scope and sequence of teaching programmes and materials used in them.<sup>125</sup>

Hargreaves, A. and Goodson and others argued that the kind of knowledge valued by secondary school teachers in particular, as well as those who train them, is precisely the knowledge which children who are poor, working-class or members of ethnic minorities find irrelevant and/or hard to achieve. They argue that a science of teaching based on the classification of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, privileged knowledge and cognition, putting them all above 'care', is not a good foundation for school teaching. Care as well as cognition should be the heart of the teaching profession.<sup>126</sup> Sockett (1987) argued that Shulman's elaboration of pedagogical content knowledge as part of a new, scientific knowledge base for teaching ignores almost everything that is specifically moral, emotional and contextual about teaching. He suggested that it is more appropriate to compare teachers, in terms of their missions of care and for social justice, with those who work in nursing, social work and other 'caring' professions rather than the 'higher status' masculine professions.<sup>127</sup> Goodson saw the attempts of Shulman and others to define a knowledge base for teaching as one more attempt to professionalise teaching and teacher education by providing a seemingly scientific basis for their practice.<sup>128</sup> These critics have a considerable amount of disagreement with Shulman's theories. They have argued that an amalgam of content and pedagogy is uniquely the province of teachers and requires its own special form of professional understanding. By explicating this knowledge, one can make teachers' intuitive, practical knowledge and technique into visible, codifiable, professional knowledge, whereas Shulman's academic quest tries to build an edifice of teacher professionalism on a foundation of scientific certainty.<sup>129</sup>

Nonetheless, it could be beneficial to use Shulman's model for the development of teacher education. Morris (2001) contended that teachers need a body of knowledge about what works best and why, with regular training and development opportunities so that members of the profession are always up to date. She believes that teachers need the same high degree of commitment that doctors show to their own learning,

---

<sup>125</sup> Shulman, L.S., 1986, Those who understand: knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4-14.

<sup>126</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., (1996), *op cit*.

<sup>127</sup> Sockett, H, 1987, *Has Shulman got the strategy right?* Harvard Educational Review, 57.

<sup>128</sup> Goodson. 1995, cited by in Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *Teachers' Professional Lives: Aspiration and Actualities*, *op cit*.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid*, 1987, p. 8.

updating of knowledge and professional development,<sup>130</sup> but at present, teacher education is often only a weak intervention. Teachers, in spite of courses and workshops, are most likely to teach just as they were taught.<sup>131</sup>

With the growth of knowledge in contemporary society, if the negative images of teaching are to change, teachers have to become more skilled, and keep up to date with educational thinking and technological developments.<sup>132</sup>

Later in this study, I argue that the key to enhancing teachers' professionalism and professional status, particularly for Kuwait, is teacher education. In the next section literature relating to this line of argument will be reviewed.

### **Teacher education**

A common metaphor to describe the situation of teacher education is that of the crossroads (Berrill, 1994; Furlong, 1994; Knight, 1994). Teacher education in several countries is said to be at the crossroads, in the sense that there are choices to be made about future directions and strategies, and there are different views from different points at these crossroads. Whitty et al. noted that some policy makers in England and Wales – at the time of the last Conservative government – wanted to place the future direction of teacher education firmly in the hands of schools.<sup>133</sup> In Australia, there was a growing call for collaborative and collegiate attempts at providing school-based programmes of teacher education where academics working in partnership with teachers in schools encourage strategic thinking and the development of professional skills and capacities in their students.<sup>134</sup> In Kuwait, we will find later that the quality of the entrants to teacher education and the curriculum of teacher education are the two main issues under discussion.

### **Quality of intake**

Morris observes:

*'The hallmark of a profession is that those belonging to it establish high standards, set strict criteria for those seeking to enter, and ensure that those*

---

<sup>130</sup> Morris, E., 2001, *Professionalism and trust: The future of teachers and teaching*, Social market foundation.

<sup>131</sup> Ball, D.L., 1988, *Unlearning to teach mathematics. For the learning of mathematics*, 8, pp. 40-48

<sup>132</sup> Connell, R.W., 1991, The Workforce of Reform: Teachers in the Disadvantaged Schools Program. *Australian Journal of Education*, 35(3), 229-246.

<sup>133</sup> Whitty, G., Barrett, E., Barton, L., Furlong, J., Galvin, C., & Miles, S., 1992, Initial teacher education in England and Wales

<sup>134</sup> McFadden, M. and Meyenn, B., 1999, *Raising the standard of teachers and teaching*, paper prepared for MACQT, Ministerial Advisory Council on Quality of Teaching.

*standards continue to be met, while taking steps to ensure that new criteria are devised so that members of the profession are not allowed to decline'.<sup>135</sup>*

And a head-teacher agrees:

*'Standards for qualification need to be kept high; if teaching is perceived as something difficult, it will improve the status'.<sup>136</sup>*

These statements imply changing teachers' professional status by first changing the kind of people coming into teaching. In view of that, there is a set of central issues to be addressed when looking at the future recruitment of teachers. How do we attract high quality graduates into teaching? How do we fight the competition from the more prestigious and well-paying professions?

In other societies, perceptions about employment prospects for teaching graduates, and about supply and demand, affect the attractiveness of teaching as a career and the status of teacher education within universities.<sup>137</sup> Preston's work points to the cyclic nature of teacher supply and demand, also to its historical and contextual relationship with the labour market more generally.<sup>138</sup> In Kuwait, however, any graduate teacher is guaranteed lifelong, well-paid employment. Yet there is a perception (to be tested in this study) that teaching fails to attract applicants with high academic grades.<sup>139</sup> Not that high scores alone prove a suitability for teaching as a career. As Holmes (1993) argues:

*'The profile of teachers and teaching as a career needs to be lifted in order not only to attract those with high academic scores but to attract those people most suited to the occupation of teaching'.<sup>140</sup>*

Furthermore, the failure to attract academically able students easily becomes a vicious circle, with the study of education being viewed as an easy option. In Kuwait, as elsewhere, prestigious professions go together with prestigious higher education. And with free higher education for all, a prestigious higher education means a higher entry level, and the more prestigious the faculty the more attractive it becomes. The individual's only reason for not choosing the most prestigious courses is having insufficiently high grades. Almost automatically, most of the most able Kuwaitis enter 'difficult' faculties such as medicine and engineering. We will find that the entry score

---

<sup>135</sup> Morris, 2001, a speech by the Rt Estelle Morris MP to the social Market foundation, p. 1-30.

<sup>136</sup> A head-teacher quoted in *Teacher Magazine*, Highlight on Status, Issue 26 MAY 2003, p 2.

<sup>137</sup> NBEET, 1991.

<sup>138</sup> Preston, B., 1992, *Teacher supply and demand: Some issues for the coming decade*.

<sup>139</sup> This problem may not be restricted to Kuwait. See, for example, National Commission on Education, 1993, UK.

<sup>140</sup> Holmes, S., 1993, *Teaching Life: views from classrooms across Australia*. Toowoomba: Australian Council of Education Centres. p. 49.

for the College of Basic Education (primary teaching) is relatively very low and for the University's Education College (secondary teaching) only slightly higher. This tends to confirm the view of these colleges as places for students who are 'left over' from elsewhere. The situation, it may be thought, gives little incentive for able students to enter the profession.

The situation may indeed be worse than it used to be for teaching. Before Kuwait University was established, teaching was a particularly appealing career for women. Though the government was offering scholarships to study abroad, most women were not allowed by their families to travel abroad to study, for traditional and Islamic reasons; for many, teacher education was their only choice. When Kuwait University was established in the 1960s, women immediately had more career options. Nowadays, other professions are likely to be attracting the academically able ones of both genders. Teaching may even have become one of the least attractive options for academically able women. This matter will be investigated thoroughly in the fieldwork of this research. The surveys for school leavers will examine the academic ability of those who are considering teaching. Also, in the case study of the College of Basic Education, the academic ability of the student-teachers will be investigated.

Another matter to be investigated is the limited social diversity in the College of Basic Education. As mentioned in Chapter One, the two Kuwaiti teacher institutions are seen, it is generally supposed, as attractive for those with a conservative or traditional background. By contrast, prestigious university faculties, such as medicine and engineering, are seen as attractive to urbans and people who are more liberal and 'modern'.

Another possibility to consider is that both the perceived ability levels and the dominant social level of the students impact on the curriculum and the pedagogy of teacher education. For example, lecturers may prefer less demanding methods of teaching, which then produce lower educational achievements. Or they may tailor the curriculum 'down' to the perceived social class background and average ability of their students – without necessarily intending to do so. They may thus underestimate the capabilities and needs of their students. They may assume, for example, that learners' capabilities will resemble those of their parents, and that their occupational needs and futures resemble those of previous generations of teachers. An attempt will be made to investigate these possibilities.

### ***Change in a carefree society***

Kuwaiti society, as described in Chapter One, is serene in terms of higher education. Students can relax in the knowledge that all their educational goals, no matter how expensive and protracted, can be achieved without any financial cost to themselves or their families. Scholarships are not only plentiful; students are somewhat overpaid. Students tend not to value the wonderful education and opportunities that are so readily available to them. Schools, too, are devoid of the need to change in order to please some 'market', as they are more or less guaranteed the same number of students each year. Basically, schools' success and achievement are neither proved nor disproved. The dismissal of teachers for unsatisfactory practice is very rare; whether productive or dismal in their performance, teachers will be paid and kept in employment.

In addition, the government's rigid control tends further to undermine teachers' sense of responsibility within their profession. Simply, they are told what to teach and how to teach it. There is a chain of command from the ministry, to the inspectors, to the head teacher, through to the heads of departments and then, finally, to the teachers. The ministry makes all decisions without consultation with, or enquiry to, any other levels in the chain. It ensures that all policies are strictly implemented; frequent spot checks are conducted in all schools by government-appointed inspectors. It would seem that the logical recommendation would be to give teachers more control, but that might not prove successful, as teachers might utilise their power to add even more comfort to their already comfortable working environment. There is a perception that if the ministry were to release its grip on the system, teachers would take selfish advantage of their newfound power.<sup>141</sup> A head teacher described the situation as follows:

*'The main characteristic of the Kuwaiti teachers today is that they lack enthusiasm and the ambition that was prevalent thirty years ago. In previous times in Kuwait, all the teachers were foreign and connoisseurs of their profession. They were passionate about teaching and they worked to renewable contracts, which pressurized them to produce results, which they did. They had left their homeland and families; so there was little to distract them from their work. They were disciplined and took pride in themselves as teachers.'*<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>141</sup> As noted earlier, when in 1995 the government introduced a school evaluation policy whereby heads of departments were required to evaluate their teachers instead of external inspection, the new policy was soon considered to have proved unsuccessful and it was subsequently abolished, leading the ministry to return to the old policy in 1997. Ministry of Education, 1997.

<sup>142</sup> Alobaid, M., 2001, *Teachers perceptions on teaching*, MA dissertation, Institute of Education, University of London. p. 69.

However, whilst handing control lower down the chain might be unwise (and is in any case unlikely to occur), a little flexibility could go a long way.

In addition to the issue of responsibility, there is the issue of the teachers' dominant pedagogical conceptions. A previous study by the author, in 2001, showed that teachers in Kuwait perceive a good teacher as one who transmits knowledge well in a way that the student understands. Most believed that a 'successful' teacher is one who is at the centre of the teaching and learning process. These beliefs were explained firstly by understanding the culture. It is not common for Kuwaiti children to experience a really two-way communicative relationship with their parents. Cultural views are somewhat traditional, the minds of the young are considered to be impulsive and irrational, and children are raised to accept that elders are wiser and therefore should be listened to without question. This manner of respectful submission simply transfers from one context to another. This ideology of controlling and one-way communication runs down the chain from the ministry to the teachers, who tend to practise their profession in much the same manner, denying students the freedom to question and express their opinions. Students also expect their teacher to provide them with the necessary input, while their job is to consume it successfully. Watkins and Mortimore (1999) used Trigwell and Prosser's (1996) findings to argue that teachers with simple conceptions of learning rarely adopt higher-level approaches in their teaching. My previous study found that the situation in Kuwait could be depicted in much the same way as Dewey described the teaching situation in the USA in 1907:

*'The tragic weakness of the present school is that it endeavours to prepare future members of the social order in a medium in which the conditions of the social spirit are eminently wanting. The mere absorption of facts and truths is so exclusively individual an affair that it tends very naturally to pass into selfishness. There is no obvious social motive for the acquirement of mere learning, there is no clear social gain in success thereat.'*<sup>143</sup>

That quotation introduces the idea of the moral dimension of teaching and, therefore, of teacher education. This idea has had much official backing. A 1966 International Labour Organisation recommendation relating to teacher status stated that 'policy governing entry into preparation for teaching should rest on the need to provide society with an adequate supply of teachers who possess the necessary moral, intellectual and physical qualities and who have the required professional knowledge

---

<sup>143</sup> Findlay J.J., 1907, . *The School and the Child; being selections from the educational essays of John Dewey*. London: Blackie & Sons p. 28.

and skills'.<sup>144</sup> More recently, the Catholic Education Service of England published a document, 'The Common Good in Education', which states:

*'Education is about the service of others rather than the service of self.... teachers have been called to dedicate their lives to serving the young through education, to sharing with them their love of learning, their love of knowledge in particular area of the curriculum which offers insight into the Author of all knowledge. It is a noble and ennobling vocation which is diminished both by the constraints and the language of the market place...the pursuit of excellence is intrinsically good when it is seen as an integral part of the spiritual quest and not simply as a matter of competitive league tables'.<sup>145</sup>*

The Chief Rabbi of Great Britain has observed that today, teachers, the guardians of our culture, the trustees of our future, are undervalued, under-resourced, and under-supported. Their standing must rise to attract the ablest and the best to the profession, and to signal that they are role models and have a vocational career, to which it is honourable to aspire.<sup>146</sup>

In practice, in Kuwait, we need an exceptional emphasis on moral and spiritual development. It could be argued, indeed, that developing the spiritual element of the profession should be the starting point for teacher curriculum development in a religious society that admires, inspires and adopts religious beliefs. When Jewish people wanted to give Moses the highest honour they called him 'our teacher', the Jewish law spoke of honouring teachers even more than parents. Islam also emphasises teachers' role in the society, as 'they are almost prophets'.

One of the most influential writers on teacher education in the UK and North America is Fullan. He has expressed the view that subjective realities should not define what is to change, 'but simply that they are powerful constraints to change, or protections against undesirable or thoughtless change. Ultimately the transformation of subjective realities is the essence of change'.<sup>147</sup>

Fullan's point is that for changes to be successfully implemented, they should involve not only the use of new teaching materials and methods but also the alteration of beliefs.<sup>148</sup> Change in beliefs might be promoted by teacher education institutions.<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup> ILO/UNESCO, recommendation concerning the status of teachers, 1966.

<sup>145</sup> The Common Good in Education, A commentary on the implications of the Church's social teaching for the work of Catholic school and colleges, Catholic Education Service, 1997, p.7

<sup>146</sup> Sacks, J., 'Teachers, teaching and communities', conference report, Transforming teacher status, GTC, 2001

<sup>147</sup> Fullan, M., 1991, *The new meaning of educational change*. London: Cassell.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

Adams observes that the concept of the professional teacher should be rooted in three conditions: intellectual ability, as demonstrated by the capacity to engage with academic study, acquired pedagogical skills and a commitment to the importance of education.<sup>150</sup> We could, perhaps, envisage a trifocal role for their curriculum: the subject knowledge development, pedagogical skills development, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the student-teachers. Lecturers in education programmes would obviously have a significant role in contributing to new conceptions of the profession and the status of teachers. Turney and Wright (1990) argued strongly that the quality of lecturers for future teachers was inextricably linked to the quality of teachers and teaching. They made a series of recommendations to address both their own concerns about the image of lecturers in teacher programmes and the image-related concerns of teacher educators themselves. One major concern, they found, was that lecturers did not seem to realise the significance that their work had for the quality of teaching in schools, and the potential impact that improvements in their own practice had for raising the quality of teaching across systems. Their recommendations extended across the range of roles demanded of lecturers: teaching, research, scholarship, administration, supervision of practice teaching, and service to the profession. They argued for lecturers to be more proactive in pursuing opportunities to expand and upgrade the quality of their research and scholarship, and as well, to become advocates of their own successes and commentators on issues of educational importance.<sup>151</sup>

## Conclusion

One objective of the present study is to identify the status of teachers in Kuwait, through attempting to analyse the elements that form teachers' professional status. The first of this chapter's two parts engaged with the analytic or 'scientific' literature that sought to understand and explain issues relating to the status of teachers. In order to identify the status of teachers in Kuwait, it was vital to consider the issues internationally. The impacts, often crucial, of feminisation, salaries, teacher supply and the media were considered. Trust, ethics, and accountability were other factors

---

<sup>149</sup> Ball, 1987, emphasized that once teachers' ideological diversity is recognized, then the ever-present potential for conflict must also be accepted. Ball, S.J. (1987) *The micro-politics of the school: towards a theory of school organization*. London: Methuen.

<sup>150</sup> Adams, C., 2003, the chief executive of the GTC, *annual report and accounts*, 2002/03, General Teaching Council of England

<sup>151</sup> Turney, C., & Wright, R., 1990, *Where the buck stops: the teacher educators*.



considered. These discussions provided sources for designing the questionnaires, and comparative data to use in the findings of this study

The second part of the chapter focussed on the literature of deliberative attempts to find best possible ways to enhance the status of teachers by dealing with strategic issues such as professionalism and teachers' knowledge. Since the second main objective of this study is to identify the association between the status of teachers and teacher education institutions in Kuwait, the chapter dealt with issues, and some associated literature, concerning the role of teacher education in enhancing teachers' professional status.

Before moving to the next stage, a summary of the areas under investigation will be offered.

- What is the status of teachers in Kuwait? In all the surveys respondents are invited to identify (in an attitude scale) the standing of teachers in comparison with other professions.
- How is status defined in Kuwait? Respect, performance, accountability, honour, salaries and prestige are the elements under investigation.
- The differences, if any, in perceptions of teaching as a career held by genders and social groups (other variables also will be considered).
- The advantages and disadvantages of being a teacher in Kuwait.
- Factors that affect the status of teachers.
- The quality of teachers and its impact on status. The second aim of the study is established around these elements:
  - *The quality of people who are choosing teaching as a career.*
  - *The status of teacher education*
  - *Teacher education development.*

## Chapter Three: Methodology

### Introduction

The main research objective is to understand the status of teachers in Kuwait, compared with that of other professions, through identifying and studying the relevant perceptions of Kuwaitis generally and of different sectors of Kuwaiti society in particular. These perceptions were identified mainly in quantitative-incidence terms, such as percentages, as well as in more qualitative ways, and both in themselves and in comparative terms using comparative-quantitative scales. Perceptions were identified both by direct questions to Kuwaitis in various categories about their perceptions and, more circuitously, by enquiring as to their own career priorities, their expectations of teachers' skills and performance and their views of professions other than teaching. Moving from identifying to explaining perceptions was presumed to involve reference to cultural and, perhaps, political factors. The second objective in this study was to investigate the link between teacher education and the social status of teachers. As well as including this link in the surveys, a mainly qualitative investigation of it was carried out in one teacher education institution in Kuwait.

### Justification of the quantitative / qualitative balance in this study

Identifying Kuwaitis' perceptions of the status of teachers required the participation of large numbers and a highly systematic form of design that could break down the concept of status before gathering data. Accordingly, the study was heavily based on quantitative instruments, in that surveys were used to examine the status of teachers, to ensure that the results for the samples could be generalised to reflect the society as a whole. With a population of just 800,000<sup>1</sup>, distributed in no more than 6 areas, and with only around 30,000 teachers across the country, constructing samples from which generalisations of the findings could be made was possible. A predominantly quantitative study was, therefore, both necessary and possible, given my first research question.

However, the use of surveys to collect statistics has been criticised by many researchers. Criticisms often focus on the crudity of survey questions and data; questions and responses are often, arguably, too simplistic to examine the complexity of the social issues being addressed. Graham (1983), for example, criticised many aspects of the survey method, arguing that it *'reflects the ideology of*

---

<sup>1</sup> The total population in Kuwait is around 2 million, with more than 1 million foreigners. However, those foreigners are not included in the surveys for this study, except in the teacher survey.

*the nineteenth-century world in which it was developed'* (p.132).<sup>2</sup> I cannot deny that the quantitative approach examines social issues in a relatively simplistic way, yet a series of well-chosen 'simple' steps can often be a good way to deal with a complex issue. In any case, quantitative research has the advantage of 'breadth', even if it compares unfavourably with qualitative research in regard to 'depth'.

Moreover, a research instrument that can lead to general statements about large numbers (a whole population; school-leavers generally; teachers generally) is politically influential. In attempting to make a government take the issues under consideration seriously, it is essential to present research in a language which such a research audience expects. Governments are less concerned with the problems of individuals than with the wider picture and, conceivably, they are more likely to take issues seriously if they are presented in their own language.<sup>3</sup>

The relative advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative research are sometimes considered (by governments too) in terms of objectivity – but this is more questionable. The element of objectivity was indeed one of my main concerns. Since the choice of topic was personal and a matter on which I started with some definite opinions, dangerous subjectivity would have been easily induced. Therefore it was important not to consider any research design that could increase the risk of subjectivity.<sup>4</sup> Fielding and Schreier (2001) draw attention to the tendency to select field data to fit a preconception of the phenomenon and how it should be analysed, and a further tendency to select field data for analysis which are conspicuous because they are exotic at the expense of less dramatic, but possibly more indicative, data. In view of these tendencies, the firmness of the quantitative instruments used in most of this study helped resist these faults, as the character of the data, and the necessity to state hypotheses, made the research assumptions and processes more explicit and available for inspection by third parties. Moreover, if some qualitative research is then added to the 'mix', as it was in this study, it can be more easily protected from the dangers and tendencies just mentioned.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Graham, H., 1983, Do her answers fit his questions? women and the survey method. In E. Gamarnikow, & D. Taylorson, (Eds.), 1983, *The Public and the private*, London: Heinemann. p.132-147

<sup>3</sup> Westmarland, N., 2001, *The quantitative/qualitative debate and feminist research: A Subjective View of Objectivity*. [online] Available: <http://www.Qaualitive-reseach.net/fqs;texte/1-01>

<sup>4</sup> It could be argued that the sources of subjectivity and bias are more apparent in qualitative work.

<sup>5</sup> Fielding, N. & Schreier, M., 2001, Introduction: On the compatibility between qualitative and quantitative research methods. *Qualitative social research*, (2)1.

Of course, I am not claiming absolute objectivity in my use of the quantitative approach. In the controversy in regard to the objectivity of quantitative research, which has been challenged by many researchers, McRobbie (1982) has pointed out that research always requires representations, and '*representations are interpretations ... they employ a whole set of selective devices such as highlighting, editing, cutting, transcribing and inflecting*' (p.51).<sup>6</sup> If this is the case, quantitative data, like qualitative data, are interpreted and often manipulated by the researcher and therefore the process incorporates subjective acts within a supposedly pure objective analysis.<sup>7</sup> Ramazanoglu (1992) has argued that humans are unable to process information without some degree of subjective interpretation: '*it is more logical to accept our subjectivity, our emotions and our socially grounded positions than to assume some of us can rise above them*' (p.211).<sup>8</sup> Haraway (1991) has suggested that the notion of complete objectivity should be replaced by that of situated knowledge, where the researcher recognises that knowledge can never be regarded as universal.<sup>9</sup> Many feminists have started to include an 'intellectual biography' in their work, to acknowledge both the situation in which the knowledge was produced, and the located knowledge of the researcher. From these perspectives, the objectivity of my quantitative research design could not be absolute.

In any case, as just mentioned, the research design of this investigation is not solely quantitative. Cupchik (2001) has pointed out that while researchers from the two paradigms tend to stress either the realist (quantitative) or the constructivist (qualitative) approach, they are in the same position: they both deal with real phenomena, with social processes, and they both have to ascribe meaning to their data.<sup>10</sup> Cupchik (2001) sees both approaches as essentially inter-related, with quantitative research contributing towards the precise identification of relevant processes, and qualitative research providing the basis for the 'thick' description.

---

<sup>6</sup> McRobbie, A., 1982, The politics of feminist research: between talk, text and action. *Feminist Review*, 12, 46-57.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Ramazanoglu, C., 1992, On feminist methodology: male reason versus female empowerment. *Sociology*, 26(2), 207-212.

<sup>9</sup> Haraway, D., 1991, *Simians, cyborgs and women: the reinvention of nature*. London: Free Association Books.

<sup>10</sup> Cupchik, G. (2001). *Constructivist realism: An ontology that encompasses positivist and constructivist approaches to the social sciences*. Forum: Qualitative Social Research, [On-line Journal], 2(1). Available: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-01/1-01cupchik-e.htm> [12 December 2005]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].

## Triangulation

*'Accepting interrelating data from different sources is to accept a relativistic epistemology, one that justifies the value of knowledge from many sources, rather than to elevate one source of knowledge' (p. 50).<sup>11</sup>*

Combining qualitative and quantitative methods requires almost by definition the use of cross-method triangulation. Since it was introduced into the social sciences by Denzin in 1970<sup>12</sup>, the term 'triangulation' has become ubiquitous in the methodological literature of the social sciences. Kelly *et al.* (1992) distinguish three models of triangulation: (1) triangulation as the mutual validation of results obtained on the basis of different methods (the validity model), (2) triangulation as a means of obtaining a larger, more complete picture of the phenomenon under study (the complementarity model), and (3) triangulation in its original trigonometrical sense, indicating that a combination of methods is necessary in order to gain any (not necessarily a fuller) picture of the relevant phenomenon at all (the trigonometry model). These three models are in turn brought to bear upon the potential relationships between the results yielded by qualitative and quantitative methods employed in the same study.<sup>13</sup>

The cross-method research in this investigation follows the complementarity model suggested by Kelly. In the first, quantitative phase, a large representative sample was selected; data were collected by questionnaire and subjected to statistical analysis. This phase embraced mainly the first large research question of the study, as it identified the status of teachers from the perspectives of the public, teachers, and school-leavers. In a subsequent mainly qualitative phase, a case study (of the College of Basic Education) was selected and an investigation in depth was pursued. This phase related mainly to the second large research question, concerning the association between the status of teachers in Kuwait and teachers' institutions (as well as strengthening the findings relating to the first research question). The study thus constitutes different research phases, where the quantitative phase is followed by a more in-depth qualitative stage of data collection and analysis. Although each phase deals, to some extent, with a different research question, there was a mutual validation of quantitative and qualitative results. This complementarity was intended to realise a description of the phenomena under research that was at once more

---

<sup>11</sup> Fielding, N. & Schreier, M., 2001, *op.cit.*

<sup>12</sup> Denzin, N., 1970, *The research act*. Chicago: Aldine.

<sup>13</sup> Kelly, L. & et al., 1992, Defending the Indefensible? Quantitative methods and feminist research. In Hilary Hinds, Ann Phoenix & Jackie Stacey (Eds.), *Working out: New directions in women's studies* (p.149-161). Lewes: The Falmer Press.

precise and had greater depth than any description restricted to one method only. In this approach, initial quantitative data give a version of reality; this is validated and reinforced by qualitative work. However, I am aware that methodological triangulation does not necessarily increase validity. Apart from validity, its value also consists in increasing the range and depth of my investigation.

### **Initial Exploration**

Informal observation, also called unstructured or exploratory observation, is usually used when the researcher has little knowledge of a population and its behaviour. Its main purpose is often to create hypotheses to be tested later, in a survey.<sup>14</sup> Though my knowledge of Kuwaiti schools, especially primary schools, was considerable, I still considered it advisable to spend some time on informal observation in them in order to increase my feeling and understanding for the ideologies, approaches, and perceptions of teaching that are located there and that may both reflect and affect the attitudes towards teachers of those outside schools. After gaining access to different types and levels of school<sup>15</sup> from the Ministry of Education, I embarked on the observational journey. The Ministry's permission allowed me to enter any class for the purpose of observation. This was sometimes much to the discomfort of the teachers, and it was necessary to assure them that this fieldwork was solely for the purpose of research and not to evaluate or monitor them. The experience gained from this exploratory journey is not explicitly addressed in the study. However, it provided good grounding for a closer encounter with my research topic.

Exploring a different system, in this case the English system, by doing an exploratory observation in one school in London for a period of three weeks – being struck by observations regarding workload, the working environment, teachers' professionalism, teachers' attitude, teaching style, and teacher development – provided some clues regarding the possible causes and effects of the standing of teachers in Kuwait. These exploratory experiences helped in creating my research questions and designing the questionnaires.

### **Research Phases and Approaches**

Three main approaches or methodologies were employed in what may be considered three successive phases (of very unequal length, however). The first phase involved

---

<sup>14</sup> Flick, Uwe. ,1998, *An Introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>15</sup> There are three types of public primary schools in Kuwait: boys' schools run by women, boys' schools run by men, and girls' schools, all run by women, and two types of intermediate schools: boys' schools, which are run by men, and girls' schools, which are all run by women.

three large surveys conducted at intervals over a period of approximately two years, between 2002 and 2004. The second phase was a case study of an institution, which was conducted over one month in 2005. The third phase involved two interviews with members of the elite of educational policy-makers, also conducted in 2005. Each of the three phases and approaches used will now be discussed in some detail.

## **Part One: The Survey Methodology and the Questionnaire Method**

Three major self-administered surveys were conducted:

1. One was a **public** survey regarding teachers' status in Kuwait. A structured sample of 5,200 citizens was surveyed, using a short questionnaire consisting of 10 items. The aim of this survey was to provide empirical evidence in regard to teachers' status in Kuwait as most generally perceived. [This survey came to include, also, a subsidiary survey of 100 university students.]
2. A **final year school-student** survey was conducted to scrutinize school-leavers' perceptions of teachers' status and of teaching as a career option and the rationale behind these perceptions. This was a very important group to investigate, as its members have a first-hand perception of today's teachers (which they do not compare directly with teachers of the past); also these are the ones that are making career choices. Thus their perceptions matter, perhaps, the most. A sample of 320 school-leavers in a cross-section of secondary schools was invited to complete a detailed questionnaire with some 27 items. Almost all completed and returned the questionnaire.
3. A **teacher** survey was conducted to find out how teachers perceive themselves, how they believe the public perceives them and how this can affect their teaching and their career. A sample of 1,200 teachers was invited to complete a long questionnaire of 34 items, and a return rate of almost 95% was achieved.

## **Dealing with the Limitations of the Questionnaire-based Survey Methodology**

There are several limitations to note in using surveys as a research approach. By understanding these we may be better able to overcome some of them. Attentiveness to what constitutes a good questionnaire can prevent faults.<sup>16</sup> Cohen and Manion (1994) follow this comment by remarking that the essence of a good questionnaire is to be clear, unambiguous, workable, and interesting. Also, when

---

<sup>16</sup> Cohen, L., and Manion, L., 1994, *Research methods in education*. Fourth Edition, London, Routledge.

designing the questionnaire, constant awareness of its objectives is crucial. The advice of my supervisors was important in these regards.

De Vaus (1996) has pointed out a limitation of surveys: they rely on highly structured questionnaires that restrict responses to a predetermined menu.<sup>17</sup> However, piloting the questionnaires, discussing the questionnaire structure and items in group interviews and interviews within the culture being researched and giving the respondents the most possible options, can reduce the restrictiveness of the questionnaire. All three of these measures were adopted.

De Vaus (1996) has also pointed out the dangers of the researchers' bias, to which we may add the danger of dishonesty among the respondents. These dangers can be reduced by being aware of them and by deliberately aiming to be objective while designing the questionnaire, also by seeking constant supervision and feedback. The standardisation of questionnaires, or using items standardized in another context, can considerably reduce the element of bias in their design. An advantage of the self-administered survey is the potential anonymity of the respondent, which can lead to truthful or valid responses. Also, the questionnaire can be completed at the convenience of the respondent. Since there is no interviewer, interviewer error or bias is eliminated. When respondents are aware that the questions are widely disseminated, they should understand that this reduces the possibility of individuals being recognized; thus they will worry less about giving socially unacceptable answers.<sup>18</sup> It also helps to refer some sensitive questions to 'third parties' – e.g. 'what do teachers think of x?' rather than 'what do you think of x?'

The survey method also has a reputation for low response rates. To prevent these, as will become clear, a systematic and organized approach was used in order to control any negligence that might occur in the completion of the questionnaires. Also, I suppose, the topic of this study was interesting and appealing to many, or most, people in the samples – which would have increased the response rate. Furthermore, in a centralized system, conducting surveys under the authority of the Ministry of Education facilitated not only the distribution of the questions and the collection of the responses but also excellent response rates.

---

<sup>17</sup> De Vaus, D.A., 1996, *Surveys in social research*, Fourth Edition, London, UCL Press.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*



Surveys tend to be weak on validity and strong on reliability. The artificiality of the survey format puts a strain on validity. Reliability, on the other hand, is a clearer matter. Survey research presents all subjects with a standardized stimulus. Care over wording, format, and content can increase significantly the reliability of the research. As Salkind (2000) believes, surveys have their strengths, and the common criticisms are mostly based on inadequately designed surveys. A careful sampling can obtain outstandingly accurate results that can be comprehensive.<sup>19</sup>

### **Constructing the questionnaires: questions, variables, samples and access**

The study required not only three different research populations, but also that each population should be reasonably large. As argued earlier, interviewing the different samples under investigation was not an option, due to the large numbers of participants, and using questionnaires was the only really appropriate method for this enquiry. In addition, as Sarantakos (1996) has pointed out, questionnaires can be a vital element in translating variables into questions, and ultimately in connecting abstract concepts to specific questions.<sup>20</sup>

**Questions:** The questions in the three surveys were drawn from the research objectives and were designed in a way that would not excessively predetermine my findings. Nonetheless there will always be limitations to any type of questionnaire. In open-ended questions, the respondents may overlook answers to which they would certainly have agreed if they had been presented to them within a fixed range of choices. On the other hand, fixed-choice questions may limit their responses, or may lead them to choose what they consider the most expected answer. Due to the large amount of completed questionnaires that would have to be analysed (6760 across all three surveys), it was reasonable to use closed questions almost exclusively. Two questionnaires had a single open question, to allow participants to express views beyond the options allowed in the closed-ended questions, but it was not feasible to use an open-ended question in the public survey.

After the questionnaires were drafted, feedback was obtained from the supervisors of the study, as to the appropriateness of my questionnaires in the sense of their objectivity, language, sequence and layout. It was also essential to pilot the questionnaire, as Oppenheim (1992) has pointed out, to gain feedback which would be used to adapt it. For that reason, group interviews were arranged to discuss the

---

<sup>19</sup> Salkind, N.J., 2000, *Exploring research*, fourth edition, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

<sup>20</sup> Sarantakos, S., 1998, *Social research*, Second Edition, London, Macmillan Press.

questions, and also to help with piloting the questionnaire to students and teachers.<sup>21</sup> Davidson (1970) claimed that engaging the interest of participants encourages their co-operation.<sup>22</sup> This claim was true especially in a society that is so concerned for education.

**Variables.** *Gender* played a vital role when designing the questionnaires and samples. Even more than usual because the equality concept has not been developed in Kuwait, each gender may have very different views on career perspectives and status. And since all public schools in Kuwait are single-gender, it was necessary to break the sample down into different genders.

A second important variable in the context of Kuwait is what this thesis calls the *social group*. As explained in the previous chapter, there are the 'Civils' who live in the capital (referred to as 'urbans') and the 'Bedouin' who live on the borders (referred to as 'suburbans'), and these two groups have significantly different cultural traditions. One working assumption of the thesis was that there would be some significant differences between them in their views of teachers and teaching. However there are some areas in Kuwait where the two social groups live together. To reflect this, in the public and the teacher surveys, social groups were categorised into three: suburban, urban, and mixed. Schools were chosen equally across all three groups. In the school-leavers' survey, since a smaller number was needed, I excluded the mixed group from the sample, as the two main groups contributed enough substance for the study. It should be added that it is generally supposed – and confirmed in this research – that there are significantly more suburbans than urbans in the teacher training colleges, especially the College of Basic Education (primary training). This would suggest (though the connection is less commonly acknowledged) that there are also many more suburbans than urbans in the teaching profession, at any rate in primary schools. However, there are no official data on this breakdown.

Other variables differ in each survey, as follows: For the public survey: *age* and *parental status* were essential variables; for the student survey, the *type of school*, *year score* (grade average), and area of *specialism*; for the teacher survey, *age*,

---

<sup>21</sup> Oppenheim, A.N., 1992, *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement*, London: Printer.

<sup>22</sup> Davidson, J., 1970, *Outdoor Recreation Surveys: The design and use of questionnaires for site surveys*, Countryside commission, London.

*qualifications, school level, nationality, specialism, years of experience, and teaching hours.*

Age was an essential variable for both public and teacher surveys, firstly, to identify differences, if any, in views on teachers and teaching profession within different generations (especially since the rapid expansion of educational opportunities, wealth, and foreign travel could have led to a significant generation gap<sup>23</sup>) and, secondly, to clarify the distribution of the sample in order to validate the generalisation of findings.

In the public survey, it seemed necessary to control the parental status of the sample, since parents may have distinctive views on teaching and teachers due to their direct contact with the present system, where others are most likely to form their views from past experiences or from being currently in the actual teaching environment as students. Also parents are more able than others to compare the present status of the profession and the education system with those of earlier periods.

For the final-year student survey, school type was controlled. Kuwait's secondary education has two systems, the 'American' system (established in 1982, for Kuwaitis only), and the 'Normal' system (modified in 1985, for Kuwaitis and foreigners). Though variations in responses between the two school types were not hypothesised, yet exploring any differences between school types which became evident might be interesting. In fact, these differences turned out not to be significant.

Students' choices of specialism was another variable examined in the student survey. In both school systems, students specialize in the second year of secondary school, in either humanities (in the American systems student can sub-specialize in social studies, Islamic religion, Arabic, or business studies), or science (with sub-specialities in mathematics or science). The students' speciality might affect their views on teachers and teaching as a career option. The students' year score (grade average) was also a highly important variable in the student survey. It would help to

---

<sup>23</sup> Encarta. 2002. *Encyclopedia: Kuwait Geography, Demographics, and Resources*. [online], Available:[http://www.countriesquest.com/middle\\_east/kuwait/the\\_people\\_of\\_kuwait.htm](http://www.countriesquest.com/middle_east/kuwait/the_people_of_kuwait.htm) [5 March 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

identify whether students' views on the status of teachers and teaching as a career option were affected by their own status as students.

The teacher survey sought to establish the duration of teachers' working hours as something interesting in itself and as connected with people's perceptions of their status. Teachers' particular workloads could affect their views on their professional status. Years of experience was another variable; correlations were sought in the teachers' responses between their views of teaching, of the education system, and of their professional development and the number of years for which they had worked as teachers.

Identifying the nationalities of teachers (Kuwaitis / non-Kuwaitis) was a crucial feature of the teacher survey. In such a nationalistic society as Kuwait, the experience of teaching may differ considerably for Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis.

Qualifications were another variable examined in the teacher survey, since these could correlate with different views on their profession. For example, a teacher with a diploma degree might be more satisfied with her/his status than a teacher with a master's degree. Or, perhaps, the more teachers are qualified the more they regard their contribution as altruistic and satisfying. Finally, teachers' school level and specialism were also built into the teacher survey. Teachers were divided into primary, intermediate, and secondary, also into humanities, science, and elective teachers. Though no advance hypothesis regarding these variations was established, it seemed that they, too, ought to be examined.

Most of the variables were made evident in the general information section of each questionnaire (see appendices).

## **Samples**

A descriptive study, such as this, is by definition designed to gain more information about a particular characteristic within a certain field of study. It may be used to develop theory, identify problems with current practice, justify current practice, make judgements or identify what others in similar situations may be doing.<sup>24</sup> This type of study may need hundreds or even thousands of subjects, depending mainly on the size of the population which is being studied, to ensure an acceptable degree of

---

<sup>24</sup> Gay, L. R. and Airasian, P., 2000, *Educational research: competencies for analysis and application*, Sixth Edition, Merrill/Prentice Hall.

confidence and statistical significance. The complexity of the topic may be an additional reason why a large sample is needed to ensure precision (validity and reliability).<sup>25</sup>

Different sampling approaches were used for the different surveys, as determined by the aims of the particular surveys and the data collection methods used. The overall aim in each case, however, was to be able to generalise the findings from that survey.

As indicated, the most essential measure of the usefulness of a sample is how representative it is of the larger population, in other words, how confident we are in generalising from the sample to the population. I have used a stratified random sampling procedure<sup>26</sup>, to make sure of a proportional representation of population subgroups.

In all three surveys, a form of block sampling was used, based on geographical areas within Kuwait, in order to control for social groups. Since it was impractical to research each local community, sample blocks were selected within each of the main areas to reflect their variations on this particular characteristic of interest in the larger population.

For the public survey, I needed to use intermediaries (schools, inspectors, students) to reach my samples, and the intermediaries had to be briefed on the categories of participants to approach. 'Network sampling', often known as 'chain-referral'<sup>27</sup>, was used to distribute and collect the questionnaires. Students were the intermediaries to the different sectors of society, as well as being respondents themselves in the case of those at intermediary and secondary levels. The disadvantage of this method is that the relationship with the samples becomes second-hand. Intermediaries make direct contact with potential respondents, and they may give misleading accounts of the aims and objectives of the study. A cover page stating the aim of the study reduced the chances of misinterpretation. It gave specific instructions as to whom the intermediary should involve, in order to keep the sample structured through the snowball process. The intermediaries were also given oral instruction emphasising the desired distribution of the sample. The student participants themselves

---

<sup>25</sup> Sarantakos, S., 1998, *Social research*, second edition, London, Macmillan Press

<sup>26</sup> In a stratified sample the sampling frame is divided into non-overlapping groups or strata, e.g. geographical areas, age-groups, genders. A sample is taken from each stratum

<sup>27</sup> Godstein, H., 1995, *Multilevel statistical models*. London, Edward Arnold; NewYork: Halstead Press.

represented an age-range that forms some 28% of the Kuwaiti population, and in the six districts of a small society with such strong family ties, where uncles, aunts, and grandparents gather on an almost daily basis, the chain-referrals technique used to create the rest of the sample could reasonably be expected to yield a sample that was representative of most if not all of the population.

To improve the theoretical basis of the sampling, random selection of schools within the blocks and random selection of classrooms were applied within the sampling techniques described. This reduced the element of bias in the research. Other methods for increasing confidence in the reliability of sample results included small elements of triangulation and induction.<sup>28</sup> These methods were applied through small and sometimes informal interviews and group interviews which were conducted in the schools under study while piloting and distributing the questionnaires. The participants were asked to comment on the questions under study and were also asked to speculate on the findings.

The recommended percentage allowance for sampling error (acceptable margin of error) determined the sample size needed for each survey. For the public survey (sample size: 5200), the results are likely to be accurate  $\pm 1.35$  at the 95% confidence level. The teachers' survey (sample size: 1188), the results are accurate  $\pm 2.77$  at the 95% confidence level. For the school-leavers' survey (sample size: 320), the results are accurate  $\pm 5.4$  at the 95% confidence level.<sup>29</sup>

### **Access**

In order to gain high return rates from the respondents in large-scale research it may be essential to use well-placed intermediaries, people or members of institutions with special knowledge and access to individuals, groups, places, institutions and data. In this study, all three surveys were distributed through schools, given that two of the surveys were directed to school-leavers and teachers. And for the public survey, schools were a suitable field for the geographical and stratified division needed.

In order to gain access to students, a chain of permissions was required. Under the centralised government of Kuwait, the total support of the Ministry of Education was enough to start the chain. Though forced compliance or official permission are

---

<sup>28</sup> De Vaus, D.A., 1996, *op cit*.

<sup>29</sup> In determining the sample size, the calculation of confidence intervals was an accessible approach to sample-size estimation.

usually associated with reluctant or minimum cooperation from the participants, this was not the case here. The nature of the study allowed principals and teachers to express their feelings in regard to the matter under study. The inspector intermediaries used for the teacher survey reported that teachers were eager to be heard; they felt that these surveys were their channel to communicate with the government. They especially evinced a high sense of appreciation of the purpose of the study. In the school-leaver survey, the teachers in each class under study encouraged their students to cooperate. School-leavers in turn took the survey seriously, firstly because their teachers asked them, and secondly because they were school-leavers and discussion in regard to their career options clearly interested them, as had been anticipated. As for the public, students in the survey were the intermediaries, and organised access to them via their schools was a necessity. The encouragement of their teachers and their own enthusiasm are both reflected in the high return rate achieved in this survey. In sum, the Ministry of Education, the school principals, inspectors, teachers, and students each played a vital role in providing access and ensuring high return rates.

### **Piloting**

For the public survey, it was important that the student distributors would themselves understand the questions. I visited one intermediate school, randomly chose 14 students (in the break) and asked them to answer the questionnaire and to identify the words or questions that they found hard to understand. Following their comments, in the last question I had to modify the phrase 'financial security' to 'salaries'.

For the teacher surveys, the questionnaires were handed to 10 teachers who were my friends and discussion of items of the questionnaire resulted in minor modifications to the choice of Arabic terms, such as the words for 'autonomy' and 'selectivity' in Arabic. Also they suggested the addition of 'Bachelor in Education' and 'Bachelor' to the item about qualifications.

For the school-leavers, the questionnaire was piloted with a whole class of 27 students selected randomly in one school, who were asked to comment on the clarity of the questionnaire and invited to give suggestions. No modification emerged as necessary from this exercise.

Each of these piloting processes was conducted without a time limit. In the light of the time needed to answer the questions, a time frame was established for each questionnaire.

### **Ethical issues in dealing with participants**

As this study deals with humans, I had an ethical duty to ensure that no harm was done to the rights, dignity and safety of the participants. For all the participants in this study, I ensured the ethical right to privacy and anonymity. The consent to conduct the research was granted by the Ministry of Education and the head teachers of the schools under study. The permission to conduct the questionnaire to students was sought from head teachers, not individual students, as there seemed to be no better way of securing it and there was no potential harm to the students.

### **The Public Survey and Questionnaire**

The format of a questionnaire affects the length and type of answer provided and, therefore, the amount of time required coding the answers and the complexity of the data analysis.<sup>30</sup> This is particularly important in a very large-scale survey like the public survey (sample size: 5.200). Only 10 questions were included in the public questionnaire; all of them were closed questions and all were contained on a single page. Each question was made as clear and easy for the respondent to understand as possible, by avoiding double questions, leading questions, and complex questions, and by keeping all the questions short. Furthermore, the questionnaire started with questions that, it was supposed, would immediately interest the respondents.

Of the 10 questions, the first 6 were designed using an attitude scale to elicit one of four different responses. The respondents were not given the irresolute option here, for the reason that they might have tended too much to avoid taking sides, due to the delicacy of the subject. Taking sides might have seemed to them politically incorrect and to be avoided if possible. Also, due to the unfamiliarity and ambiguity of the subject, respondents might have preferred to be indecisive as an easy way out.

Questions 7 and 8 were designed to elicit one of three different responses regarding the public's views on teachers' performance (*excellent job, acceptable job, or poor job*) and status (*low, medium, or high*).

---

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*



Questions 9 and 10 were multiple-choice, and designed to elicit respondents' choice from four possibilities as to Kuwait's main educational problem (*quality of teachers, the curriculum, teaching methods, students' motivation*), and as to why teachers choose the teaching profession (*salary, easy to become a teacher, holidays, love teaching children*). Again, the 'don't know' option was not offered.

5200 Kuwaitis took part in this survey; that is 0.5% of the population. I excluded the population who were less than 10 years old, due to the nature of the questionnaire.

Twenty schools and Kuwait University were chosen as the distribution centres. Student intermediaries were handed a pack of copies of the questionnaire to be completed by members of their families from several generations. The distribution strategy was to exploit my access to pupils in the controlled environments of their schools and the access of pupils to their families. In more detail, the distribution was as follows:

- 400 questionnaires were distributed to 100 university students. Each student got their own copy, and 3 extra copies to be completed by members of their families.
- 1200 questionnaires were distributed through 8 secondary schools to 200 secondary students. Each student got their own copy, and 5 extra copies to be completed by members of their families.
- 3600 questionnaires were distributed through 12 intermediate schools to 600 intermediate students. Each got their own copy and 5 extra questionnaires to be completed by members of their families.

The variables in this survey were gender, age, social class, and parental status. These were identifiable from the general information section of the questionnaire, except for 'social group'. This last was distinguished as follows:

- The University of Kuwait is an environment with mixed social groups, and the returns from this route were all classified as mixed. In addition, the university sub-sample was chosen from the more mixed elective classes, rather than from the specialist ones that might be more likely to have either a dominantly 'urban' or 'suburban' character. In addition, choosing from elective classes promised a better spread in relation to other variables, such as ability and family position (whether a parent or not).
- In secondary schools, the questionnaires were distributed through 4 girls' and 4 boys' schools, 2 of each of which were suburban schools and the other 2 urban

schools. In each school, one class was chosen at random, and 25 packs of copies were handed out to the individual students in the class.

- In intermediate schools, the questionnaires were distributed through 6 girls' and 6 boys' schools, 2 of each of which were suburban, 2 urban, and 2 mixed in social group terms. 50 packs of copies were handed out to two randomly chosen classes in each of the 12 schools (25 copies per class).

Urban 1800		Mixed 1600		Suburban 1800	
Secondary 600	Intermediate 1200	University 400	Intermediate 1200	Secondary 600	Intermediate 1200
100 students +500 contacts	200 student +1000 contacts	100 students +300 contacts	200 students +1000 contacts	100 students +500 contacts	200 student +1000 contacts

Arrangements were made with the class teachers to collect the copies and hand them in to the head-teacher's secretarial office within three days of the distribution. And for the university lecturers, the copies were collected within two to four days.

The return rate for the public survey was 96.6%, with 5023 responses out of 5200. This represents 0.63% of Kuwait's population. (A still larger proportion, 99.5%, of the student intermediaries returned at least some completed questionnaires.) The age ranges 51-65 and 65+ were under-represented in the responses received, with 10% of the responses against around 20% of Kuwait population; in particular, the 65+ group, whose respondents numbered only 35, was not well represented. As the questionnaire was distributed mainly to students aged 10-18, their family members were mainly aged below 50. However, since the 51-65 group differed little in their views from other groups, the shortfall in their representation came to seem less important than at first sight.

Interestingly, though students were not required to distribute the questionnaire to equal numbers of male and female family members, there was an equal distribution of genders in the responses.

60% of the respondents were parents, including 88% of the 23+ age group – which apparently, is an accurate reflection of the society as a whole.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> See appendix, Kuwait demographics.

### **School-leavers' Questionnaire**

In designing the student and teacher questionnaires, some existing instruments with standardised and tested questions were drawn upon for some questions, partly with a view to providing comparable data.<sup>32</sup>

The school-leavers' questionnaire was administered to 320 students. Apart from the general information section, it included 27 closed-ended items and 1 open-ended question. The general information section was mainly designed to quantify the variables of this survey, after which the questions were divided into sections, based on its objectives. The first section investigated Kuwaitis' attitude towards higher education and, specifically, towards teaching as a profession. Students had to choose from three responses (*yes, no or undecided*). The second section was restricted to those students in the sample who were considering teaching, to examine the extent of twelve different influences on their attitudes toward teaching as a career. For each of these possible influences, students were asked to choose their importance on an attitude scale of one to five. Two questions in this section were designed for all students in the sample to choose the most important from eight reasons for considering or not considering teaching as a career. In the third section, eight questions were designed to identify these school-leavers' perceptions of the status of teachers. Seven were in the form of a statement, to which the students were asked to indicate the extent of their agreement by choosing from an attitude scale of five responses. In the eighth question in this section, students were asked to indicate on a scale of 1 to 10 where teachers' prestige stands in comparison with other university graduate professions (10 was the highest). The last item on the questionnaire was an open question, where students were able to express their views on teaching as a profession in Kuwait.

As indicated earlier, five variables figured in the construction of the sample for this questionnaire. Four were defined according to the answers to the general information questions: gender, school type (American, also called the two-credit system or Normal), specialist subject, and year score (grade average). The fifth variable, the social group, was identified from the geographical locations of the different schools.

---

<sup>32</sup>Comparative data from a study in England, University of Leeds, Centre for Science and Mathematics Education, Edited by Donnelly, J. ,2002, *Science and Mathematics Undergraduates' Attitudes to Secondary School Teaching as a career*. Final Report, CSSME, School of Education.

The table represents the distribution of the stratified sample

Girls' Schools (160 students)				Boys' schools (160 students)			
Suburban 80 students		Urban 80 students		Suburban 80 students		Urban 80 students	
American 40 Students	Normal 40 Students	American 40 Students	Normal 40 Students	American 40 Students	Normal 40 Students	American 40 Students	Normal 40 Students

The questionnaires were distributed and collected in the last 15 minutes of a lesson. Their teachers were present; I asked them not to interact with students in order for them to feel free to answer the delicate questions in regard to the status of teachers.

### Teacher Survey and Questionnaire

The participants in this survey had the largest number of variables, nine. Some of them were controlled from the choice of the sample, and others were identified from their responses. The controlled variables are the gender, school level, specialisms, and social group (location). All variables, except social groups, could be confirmed or identified from the answers to the general information section of the questionnaire: gender, age, qualifications, nationalities, school levels, specialisms, years of experience, and working hours. The social group was distinguished from the school's location.

The teachers' questionnaire was administered to 1188 teachers. Apart from the general information section, it included 33 closed-ended items and 1 open-ended question. After the general information section, ten questions were designed to identify teachers' perceptions of the status of teachers and teachers' institutions in Kuwait. These were in the form of statements, to which teachers were asked to point out the extent of their agreement on an attitude scale of one to five.

Section three was designed for teachers to assess their professional status by comparing it with that of other professions. Teachers were then asked to choose the three most prestigious professions and, also, the three most honourable ones. Giving teachers the option of selecting 'others' was thought necessary here. In investigating the relation between scientific knowledge and the appreciation of a profession, teachers were asked to identify the extent of knowledge required from teachers, on an attitude scale of one to four.

Section four was designed to examine teachers' perceptions of teacher education in Kuwait. Teachers were asked to express the extent of their agreement with seven statements, on an attitude scale of one to five.

In section five, seven statements were made in regard to the development of teachers' professional status. Teachers were asked to identify their views on each statement, on an attitude scale of one to four.

Two further questions were designed for teachers to choose the most attractive and the least attractive factors in teaching, in each case out of many given factors.

Towards the end of the questionnaire, teachers were asked to point out on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 was the highest) where teachers' prestige stands in comparison with other professions for university graduates. Another question was designed for teachers to express their satisfaction with their status on an attitude scale of one to five. The last question was an open question, where teachers could express their views on ways to improve their status as professionals in Kuwait.

Due to the nature of the questionnaire, for which it was a necessity for many variables (social groups, gender, specialisms, and school level) to be controlled, it had to be distributed in a systematic manner. The Ministry of Education had offered a great deal of facilitation. A meeting with a number of inspectors was set up, in order to explain the purpose of the study and to distribute the sample. In the meeting, the inspectors were asked to distribute the questionnaire in all six areas in Kuwait, with equal representation of teachers' specialities, school level, and gender. Inspectors were requested to return the questionnaires within a month from the meeting.

36 schools took part in this survey. The distribution of the sample was as follows:

- 400 questionnaires were distributed to teachers in the urban areas through 12 schools, four primary, four intermediate, and four secondary, with two schools of each gender for each stage.
- 400 questionnaires were distributed to teachers in mixed social areas through 12 schools, four primary, four intermediate, and four secondary, with two schools of each gender for each stage.
- 400 questionnaires were distributed to teachers in suburban areas through 12 schools, four primary, four intermediate, and four secondary, with two schools of each gender for each stage.

The table below illustrates the distribution of the sample.

Urban 400			Mixed 400			Suburban 400		
4 Primary	4 Intermediate	4 Secondary	4 Primary	4 Intermediate	4 Secondary	4 Primary	4 Intermediate	4 Secondary
66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male	66 female and 66 male

The total of 1188 questionnaires represents 4% of the 30,000 teachers in Kuwaiti public schools. If we exclude kindergarten teachers, the sample represents 4.5% of 26,600 teachers. The return rate of the teacher survey was 94.8%, as 1127 responded out of 1188. This represents 4 % of all teachers in Kuwait.

### **Part Two: The case study, and the methods used in it**

After the findings from the surveys were gathered, a month-long case study was conducted in the College of Basic Education (for primary teacher education). For this study, a combined qualitative and quantitative approach was necessary to identify views on the standing of teachers and of the College and, also, to capture a deep understanding of the reasons for this. A case study is the best way to illuminate such a social system as that of this College, since it can provide information about the issue in question in tandem with at least the beginnings of an explanation.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, a recognised limitation of any case study, that it cannot be properly generalised,<sup>34</sup> does not apply here. Since the case in the present study is actually the only one of its kind in Kuwait, the question of generalisation does not arise.

Before starting, the data already obtained from the surveys was scanned to identify gaps for investigation during the case study and, also, to select findings that might be used to stimulate discussion among the College participants.

### **Resources and methods used**

It is likely to be much more convincing and accurate than otherwise if a case study is based on several different sources of information, following a corroborating mode. As Selfe argues, because

*methods of indirect observation provide only an incomplete reflection of the complex set of processes involved in composing, a combination of several such methods should be used to gather data in any one study.*<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Sarantakos, S., 1998, *op cit*.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>35</sup> Selfe, C.L., 1985, *An Apprehensive writer composes, when a writer can't write: Studies in writers Block and Other Composing-Process Problems*, Guilford, p. 90

The methods used to collect data in the case-study were:

- *Non-systematic observation of college life and culture;*
- *Observation of three classes;*
- *Questionnaire for a probability sample of 160 students;*
- *Group interviews – four held with students and one held informally with lecturers;*
- *Interviews with 6 lecturers;*
- *Documentary analysis.*

Each of these methods will be considered further here, in the order of the list above.

***Non-Systematic Observation of College Life*** To study an existing social activity, it is best to start by just watching what happens, to learn the structure of the actions. As soon as invariance in the data becomes apparent, the material that is no longer relevant can be omitted and the remaining relevant information can be compressed.<sup>36</sup> Exploratory observation is already basically abstraction and generalization. The empirical observations must be translated into concepts by further abstraction. Generalization means arranging the material so that it disengages from single persons and occurrences, and focuses on those structures that are common to all or most of the individuals in the case or the category (e.g. in this case, the lecturers, or the students, or the female students). There is often no clear borderline between observation and analysis of the collected data.<sup>37</sup>

Denzin (2003) pointed out that the observer's interests and expectations might affect what is being observed, as selective interpretation may occur.<sup>38</sup> In order to minimise this problem, I tried to keep an open mind and avoid early conclusions, and I made a conscious effort not to dwell on any one aspect of a situation unless it was extremely significant. The data were analytically gathered, by categorising them in themes, and writing notes under each theme. Some notes were lengthy (e.g. concerning the culture and morale) and others were short (e.g. on teaching methods and the curriculum). Necessarily, more themes were added in the course of the observation.

Basic procedures had to be followed in the interests of accuracy and/or efficiency:

- The time and date when the observation took place were noted.
- The background to the situation was sketched, including descriptions of where the observation took place and the characteristics and roles of participants.
- Abbreviations or symbols were used to accelerate note taking.
- Any "impressions" or "thoughts" were noted separately.

---

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Denzin, N.K., 2003, *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*, second edition, Thousand Oaks; London: SAGE

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

- Headings and sub-headings were used to divide the notes into smaller sections.

During this month, the culture of the college, the standards, the curriculum (traditional, or progressive), the teaching methods, and the lecturers and students morale (overall verbal and non-verbal impressions) were the topics under observation.

***Class observations*** The first steps in the case study fieldwork were class observation and piloting the questionnaire. For observation, three classes from different departments were chosen, in child development, the development of Islamic education, and Islamic comprehension. The choices were deliberately selected from compulsory core modules where students from different specialities could be found.

Broadly, there are two styles of viewing an activity: holistic and analytical. As the focus of my class observation was a broad mixture of teaching methods, curriculum, students' learning, and the college culture, the use of holistic, non- systematic observation was suitable. I was welcomed to attend the classes, and sat at the back to observe and write notes.

To get more accurate findings, a limited number of aspects (mostly cognitive)<sup>39</sup> were observed in the first class, and then the observation was repeated in the other classes. The purpose of the class observation was to explore the style of the curriculum and the teaching methods (e.g. progressive or traditional) and, also, the students' reactions and behaviours (as shown by e.g., collaboration, boredom, satisfaction, understanding). I realised, during the fieldwork, that the most purposeful way to understand the culture of a college is through class observations.

***The Student-teacher Questionnaire*** A questionnaire was used with the main purposes being to identify the weaknesses and the strengths of the college and to gather data on the type and standard of students entering the college. The findings were used, also, for correlation and comparison with the other three surveys.

---

<sup>39</sup> -Uses ideas of students-Asks questions-Students' response specific-Students' response choral-Students' response open-ended-Teacher gives information-Teacher directs students-Low achievers' understanding-High achievers' attitude towards the knowledge given-Formative and summative feedback-Teacher's resources-Professional skills of teacher (questioning technique, explanations, motivation)-Teacher's knowledge of the subject matter



A general information section of the questionnaire identified respondents in relation to seven variables: gender, age, marital and parental status, social group, year of study, and students' specialism. The main section included 21 closed questions and one open question.

In order to identify the quality of students entering the college students were invited to answer questions on five topics:

- Reasons to enter the college (six options given)
- If they like teaching ('Yes' or 'No' options given)
- Describe the students in the college (9 options given)
- If they have repeated modules (three options given)
- If they think that academically able students are likely to enter the teacher education colleges (an attitude scale of 5).

To explore the impact of the curriculum, they were invited to answer 5 questions:

- To choose a description of the curriculum (5 options given)
- To describe their use of the library (4 options given)
- To say whether essays were required (4 options given)
- To identify the best characteristic of the college (4 options given)
- To assess the difficulty of the curriculum (an attitude scale of 5)

To examine their expectations from the profession, two questions concerned:

- The attractions of the profession for them (9 options given)
- The disadvantages of the profession (7 options given).

To identify their perceptions of the status of teachers, 5 questions addressed:

- Their perceptions of the status of teachers on a scale of three: *high*, *medium*, or *low*
- Their sense of how teachers are appreciated in Kuwait (on an attitude scale of 4)
- Their view on how much teachers are respected (on an attitude scale of 5)
- If they saw teachers' status as equal to that of other professions (on an attitude scale of 5)
- If they saw teachers' status as lower than that of other professions (on an attitude scale of 5).

4 questions sought to identify their perception of the status of their college:

- If the college has low status (on an attitude scale of 5)
- If the Education College has higher status than the College of Basic Education (on an attitude scale of 5)
- If primary teachers have lower status than secondary teachers (on an attitude scale of 5)
- If teaching requires special skills (on an attitude scale of 4).

An open question sought respondents' views on ways to improve the status of their college.

The questionnaire was piloted with one class of 11 students chosen randomly, and then the questions were discussed with them. Consequently, one question was added, in regard to the difficulty of the curriculum.

The questionnaire was distributed on the 10th of May, 2005. 160 copies were distributed equally to both genders in the two campuses of the college, and in core classes for core modules to better ensure a diversity of students. To ensure a high return rate, questionnaires were handed to students in the last 10 minutes of each class, and collected immediately after the class. The return rate was 100%.

**Group interviews with students** The aim of the group interviews was to understand the culture of the college: in particular what type of students enter the college, the nature of recruitment interviews, students' backgrounds, and the curriculum style. It was thought that students' reflections on the findings from the earlier survey could provide a picture of their own values and views. So, with some of those data and findings in hand, students were encouraged to interact in a discussion about their profession and their status, addressing the following themes:

- Becoming a teacher: views, reasons, advantages and disadvantages;
- The curriculum: views, advantages and disadvantages;
- Recruitment: views, advantages and disadvantages;
- Gender issues within the profession.

Morgan notes that while the use of group interviews as a methodological instrument may seem unconventional, in a case study it can provide data on respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way that would not be feasible using other methods.<sup>40</sup> Kreuger noted that these attitudes, feelings and beliefs may be partially independent of a group or its social setting, but are more likely to be revealed via the social gathering and the interaction which being in a group interview entails. Group interviews elicit a multiplicity of views and emotional processes within a group context.<sup>41</sup> As people get involved in the spirit of group discussion, they may reveal more than they would in the more formal interview setting.<sup>42</sup> Due to the sensitivity of the topic, encouragement through group discussions was needed.

---

<sup>40</sup> Morgan D.L., 1997, *Focus groups as qualitative research*, Second Edition. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>41</sup> Kreuger R. A., 1988, *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research*. London: Sage.

<sup>42</sup> Krueger, R. A. and Casey M.A., 2000, *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Two group interviews were conducted in each of the men's and the women's campus. The number of students in each group varied between four and seven. The individuals for the groups were selected because they were believed to be representative. Discussions were tape recorded, and after each discussion the data were collated and organized in a systematic manner, exercising the following procedures:

- The key points were summarised.
- Any weaknesses were pointed out, for example, the student comments where quite short, also some of the students where not loud enough to be heard in the tape recorder.
- Conclusions were noted separately from the record of the discussion.
- Key findings were identified, for example the overall perceptions on the status of teachers, the advantages and disadvantages of teaching, perceptions of their college etc.
- Useful and objective statements were noted, mainly regarding the overall impressions gathered from the students regarding their morale and their attitudes towards the profession and their college.

Also, non-verbal communications, expressions of emotion, and energy levels were noted.<sup>43</sup>

***Interviews with lecturers*** Interviews were conducted with six lecturers<sup>44</sup> to explore their views on the status of teachers and on teaching as a profession in Kuwait. Again, some of the interview questions were derived from the findings from the questionnaires. Others invited the interviewees' views on the culture of the college, and on its curriculum, teaching styles, and standards.

The interview subjects were an 'opportunity sample'; selected simply because they became available. One principle involved in such sampling is that only a few subjects may be needed to confirm that a particular behaviour exists. The drawback is that their views on matters of opinion cannot be taken as representative. The lecturers selected were from two departments: three from the department of education and three from the department of psychology. It was extremely beneficial to be an outsider, as this enabled the interview subjects to be frank and unreserved.

A central choice in conducting interviews is between structured, unstructured, or semi-structured techniques. Structured interviews would have facilitated the use of statistics in analysing results, but the nature of the case study required going beyond a simple interrogative approach to deeper exploration.<sup>45</sup> Unstructured interviews

---

<sup>43</sup> Kreuger R. A. ,1988, *op.cit*

<sup>44</sup> Most lecturers teach in both men's and women's campuses of the College of Basic Education.

<sup>45</sup> Longan. T., 1984, '*Learning through Interviewing*' Pupil perspectives, London: Croom Helm.

might have been suitable, but not all lecturers would have the time and the patience for a form of interview that risked proving unproductive. Semi-structured interviews were therefore used, where the interviewer was free to probe beyond the answers (in a manner that would have appeared prejudicial to the aims of standardisation and comparability in a survey). The open-ended questions were designed to allow the interviewer to pragmatically change the sequence of the interview as would seem appropriate in each case.

The value of a semi-structured interview depends on the skill of the interviewer at the time of the interview. Gaining the confidence of interviewees requires a sympathetic understanding which puts interview subjects at ease; it also requires showing empathy, and affirming the validity of their opinions. Other recommendations advise interviewers to avoid using complicated terminology, refrain from patronising informants, and make reassuring statements.<sup>46</sup> While conducting the interview I followed these guidelines.

Interviews were conducted in locations that facilitated discussion, since the lecturers' own rooms were used. During the interviews, I modified the sequence of questions, changed words and added more questions to suit the interviewee, as Cohen and Manion (1994) suggested.<sup>47</sup>

During one interview, a lecturer recommended me to include his colleagues in our discussion; thus it became a spontaneous but productive group interview of four lecturers.

**Document selection** One of the methods used in this case study was the investigation of documents in regard to ***the establishment of the college, some statistics, textbooks, some lecturers' lists of examination results, and students' high school grades***. The administrative office and other workers and lecturers in the college facilitated this activity. Issues of confidentiality meant that some of these documents could not be photocopied.

It was difficult to decide which documents and materials to use. The mass of information seemed overwhelming. Often, too, information was available in a number

---

<sup>46</sup> Hertz, R., et al., 1993, Fieldwork in elite settings: Introduction. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22 (1) 3-6.

<sup>47</sup> Cohen, L., and Manion, L., 1994, *op.cit*

of different forms, such as lists of raw data, summaries and overviews. When searching for information, I had to consider:

- *Needs*: it is easier to select relevant materials when the questions, topics and issues are specified;
- *Constraints*: only to collect materials that could be used in the time and space available;
- *Time*: concentrating on the most recent and up-to-date materials;
- *Audience*: different sources of information would reveal different aspects of the topic under consideration. Documents and booklets produced by advocacy groups could be misleading. To avoid that, triangulating by consulting materials from a number of opposing viewpoints might be necessary;
- *Coverage*: the data should be relevant, representative, and comprehensive.<sup>48</sup>

The most valuable and relevant documents (examination results, students' entry scores, students' surnames) are the ones that I could not copy. Therefore I had to depend on my own notes for analysis. As a result, the analyses depended heavily on my overall impressions.

### **Part Three: Interviews with members of elites**

In the last phase of the study, the findings of phase one and two were presented to two influential figures in Kuwaiti society; first a former Minister of Education, a member in the parliament, and a lecturer in the university. He is well known as a radical (by Kuwaiti standards), and secondly, The Minister and General Director of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training. Each interview lasted about one hour. Semi-structured questions were used.

This study deals with social and educational matters. Therefore, the political issue raised on the subject matter cannot be disregarded. As Skrivet (2005) pointed out:

*The core reason why elite interviewing is such a fundamentally important part of political research is due to the perennial linkage between politics and powerful and knowledgeable elites. Politics can never fully be comprehended without an insight into the workings of these elites, and up-to-date, elite interviewing is the most efficacious method attainable to researchers willing to understand politics.*<sup>49</sup>

An understanding of politics plays a crucial part in comprehending the position of teachers in Kuwait. Gaining an insight into the political causes and outcomes of the position of teachers, it was believed, could be facilitated by interviewing influential figures in Kuwaiti society concerned with politics and education.

---

<sup>48</sup> Denzin NaL, Y., ed., 1994, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London: Sage Publications, p. 393-402.

<sup>49</sup> Skrivet av., Elite interviewing, advantages and limitations within political research [online]. Available: <http://www.mimersbrunn.se/arbeten/5935.asp> [5 April 2005]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].

Nevertheless, interviewing elite subjects has to be a distinctive activity, for reasons connected with access, power, openness, and feedback. Negotiating access is a crucial issue for qualitative researchers, because it is likely to influence the research process and outcomes and, compared to non-elites, access to elites is regarded as particularly difficult.<sup>50</sup> Because such access is often restricted, researchers commonly find that they need to approach interview subjects well in advance and in a formal way, deal with problems of incomplete and possibly unrepresentative samples, and gain approval from multiple gatekeepers prior to gaining direct contact with potential interviewees. Researchers must demonstrate that they are worthy of the time and support of busy and often powerful individuals. Studies of elite interviewing advise researchers to draw attention to their institutional affiliation, use personal connections where possible, and seek to obtain an influential sponsor. Researchers can negotiate access problems by stressing their academic neutrality, but at the same time demonstrating their professional and language competence as well as reliability.<sup>51</sup>

Kvale (1996) addresses the problem of the power imbalance between the researcher and interviewee. It is usually assumed that in this relationship the researcher is the one with the higher status and sense of self-worth, who is accustomed to engaging in complex conceptual debates.<sup>52</sup> By contrast, studies of elite interviewing are unanimous in stating that the power balance is likely to favour the interviewee over the researcher.<sup>53</sup> The problem of power imbalance for the researcher starts when seeking to gain access. The researcher is put into the position of a supplicant, who is humbly grateful to obtain an interview.<sup>54</sup> Also, elite subjects may easily dominate the interview because they are professional communicators used to addressing a wide range of audiences and developing elaborate and persuasive arguments.<sup>55</sup> This risk may be exacerbated if a gender difference encourages the powerful male to dominate a female researcher.<sup>56</sup> Researchers may even pervert their judgment in the face of an elite member's dominating performance and display of power.

---

<sup>50</sup> -Cochrane, A., 1998, *Illusions of power: Interviewing local elites*. *Environment and Planning A*, 30 (12): 2121-2132.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> -Kvale, S., 1996, *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

<sup>53</sup> -Taylor, S.J. & Bogdan, R., 1998, *Introduction to qualitative research methods*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

<sup>54</sup> -Cochrane, A., 1998, *op cit.*

<sup>55</sup> -Fitz, J. & Halpin, D., 1995, *Brief encounters: Researching education policy-making in elite settings*. In J. Salisbury & S. Delamont, editors, *Qualitative studies in education*., Avebury: Aldershot: 65-86.

<sup>56</sup> -McDowell, L., 1998, Elites in the city of London: Some methodological considerations. *Environment and Planning*, 30 (12): 2133-2146.

Researchers risk “overestimating the importance of what elites have to say, assuming, for example, that they necessarily know more and better what is going on in an organization”.<sup>57</sup> Researchers can, however, reduce the effects of power differences by encouraging elite interviewees to regard the interview as an intellectual discussion.

The method employed to gain access to the organization is likely to influence the openness and frankness of elites. However, some researchers report having been surprised by the degree of frankness they encountered. Studies in this field also suggest that despite the temptation on the part of researchers to refrain from criticising a prominent and persuasive figure, elite interviewees are more than capable of dealing with demanding and abstract questions.<sup>58</sup> Elites may, nonetheless, answer questions in a guarded fashion because of fears that their comments may be used against them. Concerns about anonymity may be very real in some cases.

Evidently, the research topic and its perceived sensitivity among elites are critical in determining the level of openness in the interview.<sup>59</sup> It was foreseen that this research topic raised some sensitive issues, especially matters that regarded class or area distinctions. Presenting the questions with a mild manner was intended to ease the interviewees' concerns. Also, it was anticipated that knowing that the study would be published only overseas in a foreign language could increase the degree of their frankness.<sup>60</sup>

Usually, researchers need to be careful in approaching the feedback process. Some maintain that the least reliable process may be that of returning interview transcripts to interviewees for accurate verification. Transcripts are often not returned, which presents the interviewer with the dilemma of whether to interpret silence as consent.

<sup>61</sup>

In this study, limitations concerning access, power, openness, and feedback were not a serious problem. The social structure of a ‘nonchalant’ society (even with a

---

<sup>57</sup> Ostrander, S. A., 1993, Surely you're not in this just to be helpful: Access, rapport, and interviews in three studies of elites. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22 (1): 7-27.

<sup>58</sup> Czudnowski, M.M., 1987, *Interviewing political elites in Taiwan*. In G. Moyser & M. Wagstaffe (Eds.), *Research methods for elite studies*. London: Allen & Unwin: 232-250.

<sup>59</sup> Richards, D. 1996. Elite interviewing: Approaches and pitfalls. *Politics*, 16 (3): 199-204.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

centralized government) allows the public to have easy access to elites. Also, the elites in Kuwait have high respect for researchers and knowledge. To gain access to the elite subjects in this research, personal connections were used, since Kuwait is a small country and 'everyone knows everyone'. The two interviewees requested an oral outline of the research on the telephone before the actual interviews. Though they seemed friendly, the element of intimidation could not be neglected. During the interviews, the intimidation of the interviewees' power faded, as they were both welcoming and behaving like father figures rather than powerful members of the society. One, however, did tend to dominate the interview. Politely directing the interviewee to the semi-structured questions on hand was the solution to this problem.

After these interviews, the elites did not bother to request transcripts of what was said (and I did not offer these). Yet they offered another meeting if needed.

### **Analysing the data**

In analysing the data, Shank's (1994) perspective was taken into consideration. This prompts researchers to inspect and always keep in mind the logical foundations of their inquiries. Shank noted that *'Logic informs all reasoning, whether it is the hypothetico-deduction often associated with much quantitative inquiry or the inductive efforts often associated with qualitative work. For many researchers, awareness of logic, and how it informs the epistemology which supports their empirical work, does not get far beyond this distinction'*.<sup>62</sup> Shank pointed out the attentiveness needed to the several kinds of induction, and to the critical role of abduction in inquiries motivated by an analytic interest in meaning.

Furthermore, my enthusiasm for multiplying sources of information had to be controlled by monitoring the biases to which each method is susceptible. The conventional logic of triangulation is that by using several methods biases are diversified in order to transcend them. I searched for findings which were invariant or identical in the data produced using different knowledge sources. But it was not just a search for points of coincidence or agreement. I further sought to identify the scope and the conditions of invariances and to explain failures of invariance.

Considering that the data in this study are both quantitative and qualitative, various techniques of analysis and interpretation had to be adopted.

---

<sup>62</sup> Shank, G. (1994). Shaping qualitative research in educational psychology, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 19, 340-35.



**For the quantitative data:** Surveys of school-leavers, teachers, and the wider public were conducted separately. I started with the smallest sample size (320 participants) and conducted an initial analysis of the data before moving to the next survey. This approach allowed me to develop the statistical and analytical skills needed for the larger surveys. Also, with a high return rate from the school-leavers, I gained confidence in using schools as distribution centres for the public survey.

In all the surveys, a descriptive and correlational approach was chosen to examine the data. The basic purpose of correlational studies, also known as 'ex post facto' studies (from 'after the fact'), is to determine the relationship between variables, but bearing in mind that 'correlation does not prove causation'.

Microsoft Excel and SPSS were used to tabulate the data of the surveys. For open questions, responses were categorized in order to analyse the data in a systematic manner. In some cases, an attitude scale of one to five was reduced to one to three by joining extreme opinions with the less extreme. All data were presented in percentages. Cross tables and chi-square tests were used to identify correlation and statistical significance. Also, statistical significance was identified and  $p < .05$  was marked with \* (one star) and  $p < .01$  with \*\* (two stars). The mean, and in some cases standard deviation, was also recorded for attitude scales of one to four or five (likert scale) that moved directly from positive to negative (strongly agree to strongly disagree); where the scale contained a 'don't know' option, the mean was not used. Cluster and correlation<sup>63</sup> analyses were the appropriate form of statistical analysis for this descriptive study. For the public survey, a 'respondent profiling' strategy was used to determine the number of respondents with overall positive, overall negative, or mixed views. This added significantly to the overall picture of the public perceptions of the status of teachers in Kuwait.

**For the qualitative data:** Sarantakos (1998) noted that there are no existing rules to guide the researcher about how to interpret data. And although guides, in the form of numbers or meanings, might be offered, the type and direction of the actual interpretation is left exclusively to the researcher<sup>64</sup>. He pointed out that this applies to both quantitative and qualitative research. Especially in qualitative research,

---

<sup>63</sup> Regression analyses were not used, on the basis that none of the data contained continuous variables.

<sup>64</sup> Sarantakos, S., 1998, *op cit*.

researchers are largely forced to devise their own analysis scheme. Punch rightly argues that the choice of methods of analysing the data depends on the purpose of the study.<sup>65</sup>

Ball (1991) suggested an approach where the data from interviews are analysed by highlighting what seems important and interesting, with short notes being made for labelling the data. Accepting this, I did not transcribe the entire dialogues from the tapes.<sup>66</sup> I transcribed them selectively, on the basis of the sections that were related to the research.<sup>67</sup> This method of analysis was less time-consuming and it provided for focused selection, allowing the transcript to be converted into a text relevant to the research questions.

In the case study, the quantitative data from the college student questionnaire were placed at the heart of the qualitative data, inasmuch as the quantitative data were presented and then explained by the findings of group interviews and interviews. Arguably, this approach could protect against bias. However, the consequence of this was that the case study came to be dominated by the survey to an extent that had not been foreseen. The study includes passages of 'thick' description but not as many as I had originally planned, and sometimes not as 'thick' as I would have liked. Nonetheless, even when in a subordinate role, the qualitative data serves the purposes of contextualising, qualifying by contrast, or supporting the survey findings.

To finish this chapter, we should recall that, as De Vaus (1996) pointed out, ethical considerations are an important element in conducting a survey. However, they do not just protect the participants; they also relate to the researcher's professional standards. In dealing with the research, I was objective in my choice of research methods used in the study, as it has been justified on the basis of the aims of the study. I faced the challenge of overcoming the limitations of my methodological approaches, mainly by using a variety of methodological instruments. And as the research was largely based on quantitative data, I designed my sampling technique in a way which ensured a high return rate; this increased the validity of the findings. Finally, I endeavoured to ensure accuracy in the collection and analyses of data.

---

<sup>65</sup> Punch, K.F., 1998, *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*, London.

<sup>66</sup> Ball, S., 1991, *Power, conflict and micropolitics: Doing Educational Research*. London: Routledge.

<sup>67</sup> It is important to note here, that the selection of information was guarded against subjectivity by setting some means of looking at it objectively. I did not transcribe the information that was irrelevant to the status (Kuwaitis are friendly and tend to casually drift from the questions and discuss different topics).

## Chapter Four: The Public Opinion Survey

### Introduction

In this chapter I shall examine Kuwaiti public opinion in regard to the status of teachers and related matters, including the public perception of the main teacher education institutions. The examination will explore the significant sector variations (variable effects) in the public's opinions.

5200 Kuwaitis took part in this survey. 5023 responded, a return rate of 96.6%<sup>1</sup> representing 0.5 % of Kuwait's' population. The response rates for all the individual questions are also very high.

As described in the previous chapter, the questionnaires were distributed to and through students, to be completed by them and by members of their families. Kuwait University and 20 primary, intermediate and secondary schools, selected from different areas to represent a social-group cross-section of Kuwait, were involved as the centres for the 'chain-referral' distribution and return of the questionnaires. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample of 5,200 in these terms.

Table 1

Urban 1800		Mixed 1600		Suburban 1800	
Secondary 600	Intermediate 1200	University 400	Intermediate 1200	Secondary 600	Intermediate 1200
100 students +500 contacts	200 student +1000 contacts	100 students +300 contacts	200 students +1000 contacts	100 students +500 contacts	200 students +1000 contacts

The variables used in the analysis are gender, age, social group, and parental status. Three of these were controlled as regards sample proportions: age and parental status by the instructions given to the student distributors, and social group by the choice of centres of distribution. Gender was controlled only to the extent that the student respondents (and distributors) were, deliberately, equally male and female and it could be presumed that their families and connections would have significant numbers of each. They were not required to distribute the questionnaire to equal numbers of men and women in their families. Interestingly, the male and female respondents turned out to be almost exactly equal in number. The representation of the sample in Tables 1A-1F demonstrates the breakdown of responses in relation to the four variables.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ironically, the exceptionally high response rates in the surveys of this study need to be justified. They are due to many reasons. First, it is a very small country. Secondly, it is highly centralised. Thirdly, the surveys were distributed through schools. Fourthly, Kuwait has a culture of deference to authority, and I had Ministry access to schools.



Table 1A

Gender	No. of Responses	%
Female	2534	50
Male	2489	50
Total	5023	100

The gender factor was not fully controlled, as there is only an equal distribution of students' own genders and not necessarily of those of their families. However, the actual difference between male and female respondents is less than 1%.

Table 1B

Age group	No. of Responses	%
10-22	1720	34
23-35	1255	25
36-50	1578	31
51-65	435	9
65+	35	1
Total	5023	100

The number in the age group 10-22 was controlled, as they were mainly the student distributors, but other age groups are controlled only very lightly through the instructions given to the students. In fact, there is a fairly equal distribution of the age groups of respondents between 10 and 50, but a much smaller

representation of the 50+ and (especially) the 65+ group.

Table 1C

Social group	No. of Responses	%
Urban	1759	35
Mixed	1554 (incl. 400 university students and their families)	31
Suburban	1710	34
Total	5023	100

Social grouping was a controlled factor in the survey, in that the sample was distributed more or

less equally across Kuwait's six regions which are recognised to be two urban, two suburban (Bedouin) and two mixed. In fact, the two main groups, the specifically identified urbans and specifically identified suburbans, are almost exactly equal in numbers of respondents. Equal distribution facilitate generalisation of the findings.

Table 1D

Gender Social group	F	M	Total	F%	M%
Urban	930	829	1759	53	47
Mixed	801	753	1554	52	48
Suburban	803	907	1710	47	53
Total	2534	2489	5023	50	50

There is also a sufficiently equal distribution of the genders within each social group.

Table 1E

Parental status	No. of Responses	%
No children	2013	40%
Parents	3002	60%
Grand parents	590	12%

The numbers with/without children and grandchildren seem sufficient for useful comparisons to be made.

Table 1F

Parental status Age group	No child	Parents	Total	No child%	Parents%	Total%
10-13	568	0	568	100	0	100
14-17	299	2	301	99	1	100
18-22	753	94	847	89	11	100
23-35	324	929	1253	26	74	100
36-50	56	1520	1576	4	96	100
51-65	12	423	435	3	97	100
65+	1	34	35	3	97	100
Total	2013	3002	5015	40	60	100

60% of the sample, and 88% of those aged 23+ were parents. This seems an

accurate representation of the society as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix (k), Kuwait Demographics.

As has been mentioned earlier, there are 10 items in the questionnaire for the public. The responses to these items will be analysed in the remainder of this chapter, using the following method.

- A table which contains the general responses for all the 10 items will be presented. This table will facilitate comparisons in later chapters with the findings of the other surveys. Its immediate purpose here is to generate some overall **'first impressions'** of how the Kuwaiti public regards its teachers and their teacher education institutions. Matters on which there seems to be a general consensus will be contrasted with matters on which the society seems definitely divided in its views, or even split down the middle. Tentative judgements will be made, for further consideration and refinement in later sections.
- That will be followed by analysis and discussion of each of **the ten questions individually**, though in a revised sequence that is determined by grouping them under three main headings: 'performance, respect and status', 'teachers and the education system' and 'perceptions of teacher education programmes'. These analyses will focus strongly on the four variables, of gender, age group, social group and parental status. For each of the ten questions a single table will present the degrees of variation for all four variables and the discussion will comment both on variations that are significant and on the absences of variations where might have been expected (significantly insignificant variations!).
- The next section will move on to re-consider some **combinations of two questions**, particularly where the meanings of the questions overlap with each other. The degrees of correlation for these small bundles of questions will be assessed and discussed. Again, the absence of correlations where might have been expected will be noted and considered.
- A final section will seek to construct and present a number of **model 'respondent profiles'** and to estimate the extent of their presence in the society. This offers another way, perhaps a more rounded way, of understanding the range of views in Kuwaiti society on teachers and their status.



### **Part One: The Overall Picture**

Table 2 presents all the responses together, in order to allow first impressions and tentative suggestions to form before more detailed question-by-question analysis is undertaken involving the four main variables.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of the research process, the very small number of non-responses to individual questions (ranging from 0.2% to 0.6% of the 5023 respondents) is noteworthy. The very high return rate of the questionnaire tends to confirm the appropriateness of the distribution and collection techniques. In the same way, the very high rates of response to the individual questions, even though the questions offered no room for indecisive options, tends to confirm the clarity of the questions. It also suggests a society whose students (of different ages), parents and others are unafraid to have definite opinions in regard to education.

**Table 2: Overall picture**

Public reply to the questionnaire%	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree Subtotal	Disagree Subtotal	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Kuwaitis respect teachers	16	52	68	32	25	7	5008
Kuwait College of Basic Education has low status	11	43	54	46	36	10	4997
The Education College has much higher status than the College of Basic Education	30	45	76	24	19	5	5001
Teachers in Kuwait deserve to have better status	45	45	91	9	7	2	5003
Foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers	16	30	46	54	35	19	5010
The educational system in Kuwait is declining	18	37	55	45	32	13	4991
The Status of teachers in Kuwait is	High		Medium		Low		5008
	30		59		10		
Teachers in Kuwait do a (n)	Excellent job		Acceptable job		Poor job		5003
	37		55		8		
The main educational problem in Kuwait	Curriculum	Student motivation		Teaching style	Teacher quality		Total
	21	24		11	44		5011
The main reason for Kuwaitis becoming teachers	Easy to become a teacher	Holidays		Love of teaching	Salary		Total
	20	23		18	39		5012

<sup>3</sup> For all the surveys, a summarised table will be presented in the beginning of each chapter.

In terms of substantive findings there is, first, a set of contrasts to be drawn in regard to the first six questions, where it is possible to reduce the options legitimately to two: agree or disagree. These contrasts are between the different levels of disagreement among respondents across these questions. In the three questions regarding 'the College of Basic Education', 'foreign teachers', and the 'decline in the education system', opinion is divided into roughly equal measures. Furthermore, the proportions of minority 'strong' opinions on both sides of these three arguments are roughly similar, though in each case the strong opinions are easily outnumbered by the weaker ones. It seems that there are simply no signs of consensus in the society on these matters, and that between a fifth and a third of the population hold extreme and opposing views. By contrast, clear majority and minority views, but not a consensus, can be seen in the responses to the two questions about the relative status of the Secondary and Basic Colleges (76: 24%) and the important first question about whether teachers are respected (68: 32%).

The biggest contrast is with the high level of agreement (91%) with the statement that teachers in Kuwait deserve to have better status. This is at least a near-consensus. Just as striking is the fact that almost half, 45%, of this majority believe this strongly. And only 2% disagree strongly.

The fact that no other question of the six attracted anything like a 91% majority view is already enough to show that those who agree in believing that teachers deserve a better status disagree among themselves on other matters in the questionnaire. Logically, also, it should be expected that this 91% will include some who think teachers are currently doing a good job that is not sufficiently recognised in the society and others who are very critical of teachers' quality and performance but think that the only way to improve these is to make teaching a higher status profession, perhaps by bringing in higher entry and educational levels. These ideas will be investigated further in Section Three, by estimating correlations between the responses about teachers deserving better status and other responses.

This overview should now be extended to the whole questionnaire, to include also the responses to the final 4 questions, which each involved either three or four options that could not be reduced to agree / disagree. What can now be noticed is the apparent good matches, in broad terms, in the responses to three of the ten questions: the statement that Kuwaitis respect teachers (the 'actual respect' question), the question seeking an estimate of their current status (the 'current status'

question), and the question seeking an estimate of the job teachers do (the 'performance' question). In each case, the overall view seems substantially more positive than negative for teachers. Approximately a third chose the 'excellent' and the 'high' options regarding the performance and the current status of teachers. In addition, more than half chose the 'acceptable' and the 'medium' options, leaving only 10% or less to choose the definitely critical 'poor' and 'low' options. The mean for these two questions is 2.3 for performance and 2.2 for current status (maximum 3). These moderately positive opinions can also be compared with opinions on the actual respect that Kuwaitis give to teachers. Around two thirds think that Kuwaitis respect their teachers. In later sections these questions will be examined in more detail.

However, a different and more negative impression is given by the fact that in responding to the question regarding the main educational problem far more (44%) chose 'teacher quality' than any of the 3 other options. An additional 11% chose the 'teaching style' option, so that more than half sees teachers as in some way the main educational problem. This negative view might go some way to explaining why more than half the population (55%) believe that the system is declining. In the next section I shall attempt to investigate if these views are strongly associated with particular sections of the population.

More than 80% of the population believe that teachers enter the profession mainly for pragmatic reasons (easy entry, long holidays and, especially, a good salary) rather than for the idealistic or vocational reason of loving teaching. Should this be counted as a cynical view of teachers' motivation? As well as returning to this response in the following sections of this chapter, motives for joining the profession will be further investigated in the other studies and the case study.

At this early stage, then, Kuwaitis seem to have moderately positive perceptions of the actual work and status of teachers, but these perceptions are in tension with some more negative perceptions about teachers' quality and the education system. In addition, the Kuwaiti public definitely respect *the role* of teacher itself, as shown by the proportion, 91%, who believe in a higher status for teachers. Nevertheless, these are 'first impressions', needing further investigation and refinement. At the risk of some repetition, the next section will consider each question individually and more thoroughly, studying also how the four main variables apply in each case.



## **Part two: Tabulations and Analyses of Individual Questions**

In order to analyse the data further in this section and the next, the ten questions in the survey are grouped in three categories. The first concern ***performance, respect, and status***, the second ***teachers and the education system***, and the third ***perceptions of teachers' education institutions***.

For each category, the tables are designed in such a way that as far as possible they speak for themselves. The comments and commentaries are intended to highlight issues of significance and points that seem interesting. They sometimes refer to perceptions which reflect the general view; in other cases, they identify contrasts among variables. In addition to the main tables that represent the items on the questionnaire, there are also supplementary graphs showing some cross-tabulations of variables in this section.

For most tables, the columns show the data in percentages. An additional column is added at the right, with the numbers of responses to each question. The statistical significance of the effect of variables is indicated underneath the table. Later, in Part Three, further analyses of the data are presented.

### **1. Performance, respect, and status**

This section endeavours to provide evidence towards an answer to the main research question on the status of teachers in Kuwait. Four items in the questionnaire are designed to examine public opinion in regard to this matter. Those items are:

- *Kuwaitis respect teachers (agree/disagree)*
- *The status of teachers in Kuwait is (high/medium/low)*
- *Teachers in Kuwait do an (excellent/acceptable/ poor) job*
- *Teachers in Kuwait deserve better status (agree/disagree)*

These items are correlated by the implication of each for the others.

#### **▪ Performance**

One way of identifying the standing of teachers in Kuwait is to look into the public view of teachers' performance. The sample was asked to indicate the quality of teachers' performance on a scale of three. Table 3 presents the findings.

**Table 3**

<b>The job teachers in Kuwait do is %</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Acceptable</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total	37%	55%	8%	5003



Similar views have been found in two other recent surveys in other 'western' countries. In the U.S. a survey shows that the respect that Wisconsin State citizens feel for teachers continues to increase (Day, 2005). 77% of Wisconsin residents gave public school teachers a positive rating, which is an increase from 73% in 2002 and 66% in 1998.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 4A: Teachers' perceived respect %**

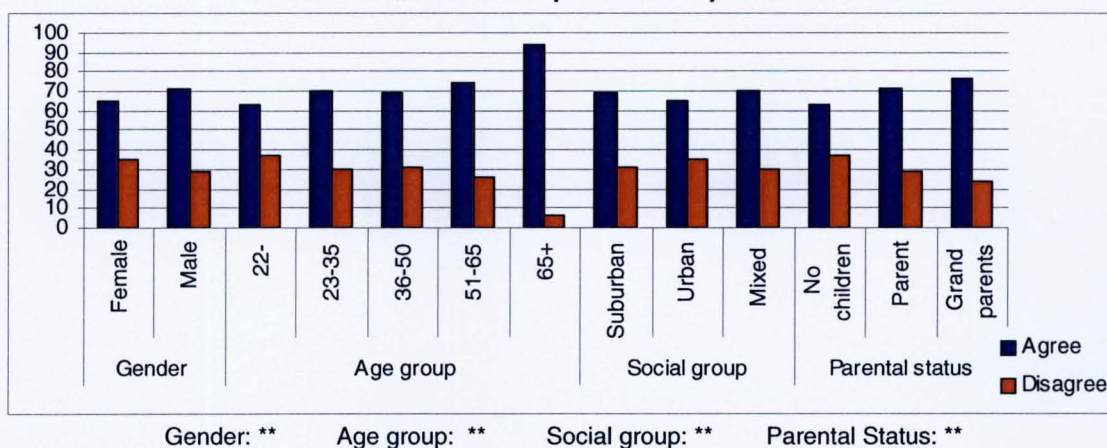


Table 4A shows that males in my survey tend to agree slightly more than females with the given statement. That could be due to the fact that fathers in Kuwait are not much involved in their children's education; it is perceived as the mothers' responsibility, therefore, perhaps, men are less critical.

There is a small increase in the degree of respect with the raise of age groups, and a big jump with those 65+ group (92% positive, compared to the average of 68%) but it should be remembered that this age-group is very small in the sample. The table also shows that parents and grandparents respect teachers slightly more than students do. The younger the age group, the less they respect teachers, though the differences are not dramatic. This is an unexpected result, as students might be expected to respect teachers more as they still represent authority and power to them. Differences among social group are small. Urbans seem to view teachers as less respected than suburban.

#### ▪ **Actual and Desirable Status**

To identify the public's views on the status of teachers, the sample was asked to place their viewpoints on a scale of one to three.

<sup>4</sup> Day, R., 2005, *Great School Program, Wisconsin Public Opinion Research, Summary Report*, Evanston, IL

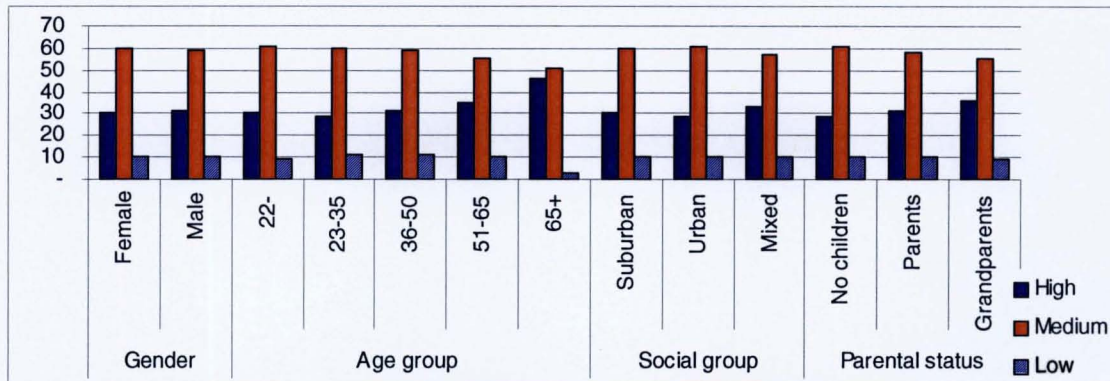


Table 5

Status of teachers in Kuwait %	High	Medium	Low	Total
Total	30%	60%	10%	5008

The findings in Table 5 show that the status of teachers in Kuwait is certainly not seen as low. The public mostly believe that it is 'medium', though many more people believe it is 'high' than that it is 'low'.

Table 5A: The status of teachers %



Gender: no sig Age group: no sig. Social group: no sig. Parental Status: parents: no sig./ Grandparents: \*\*

There are no significant differences in the responses of genders or social groups. There would seem to be an increase in the perceived status of teachers in the older age-groups (though the sample numbers in these groups work against statistical significance). The 65+ age group and grandparents tend to think more highly of teachers' status than others.

It seems that Kuwaitis view teachers as having a reasonably acceptable status; however, when they were asked if the standing of teachers deserves to be improved, the result was a near-consensus in favour of better status. Table 6 shows this.

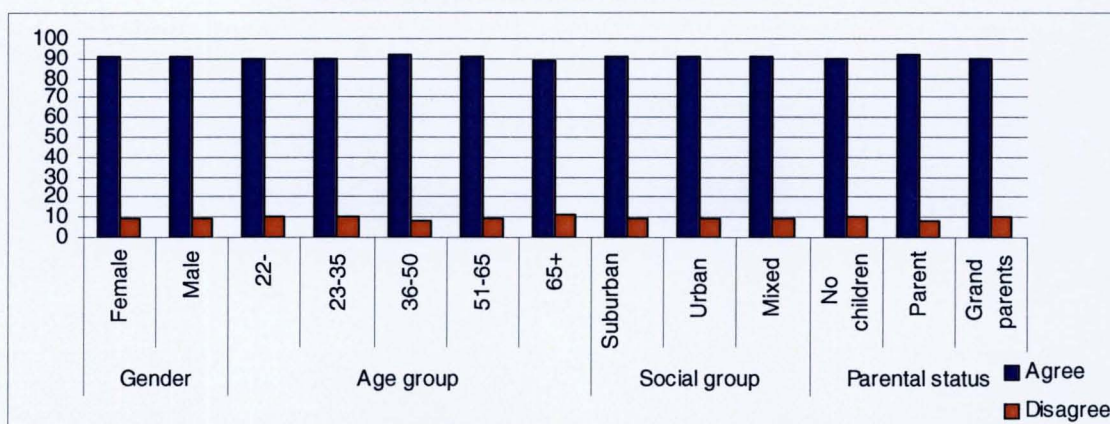
Table 6

Teachers in Kuwait deserve to have better status %	Agree	Disagree	Total
Total	91%	9%	5003

Even though the status of teachers is not low, 91% of Kuwaitis believe that it is not good enough and that they deserve better status.



**Table 6A: Teachers deserve better status %**



Gender: no sig.    Age group: no sig.    Social group: no sig.    Parental Status: parents:\* /grandparents: no sig.

This graph demonstrates very interesting data; the responses are either virtually identical (the responses for both genders and all social groups) or show insignificant differences (age-groups and parental status). 9 out of 10 Kuwaitis believe – regardless of their gender, social group, age group, and paternal status – that teachers deserve better status. This strengthens the impression of a society-wide consensus on this important point.

## 2. Teachers and the education system

The perceived quality of an organisation or an institution directly influences the public perceptions of the people who are operating it. Therefore it was necessary to explore the public's opinion of the education system. Three items in the questionnaire were designed to investigate this matter:

- *The education system in Kuwait is declining (agree/disagree)*
- *The main educational problem we have in Kuwait is (curriculum/ student motivation/ teaching style/ teacher quality)*
- *Foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers (agree/disagree)*

These items are linked, as they all refer to the situation of the education system. It seems that the public do not have a consensus in regard to this system, as Table 7 shows: opinions are divided, although there is a generally negative impression.

**Table 7**

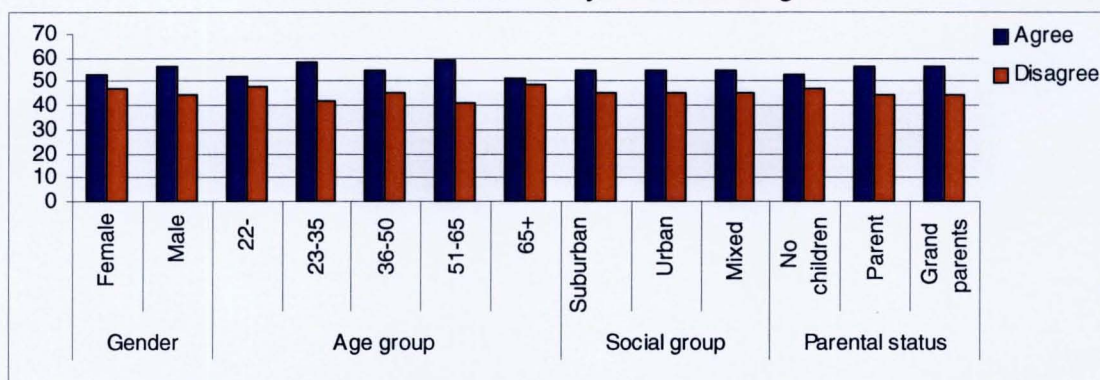
The education system in Kuwait is declining %	Agree	Disagree	Total
Total	55%	45%	4991

As well as the split almost down the middle, it is notable that slightly more than half of the population believe that the standard of education is declining. Furthermore, as



table 7A shows, this is true across all the variables. Males and the 51-65 age-group believe it more, but in all sectors the proportion stays above 50%.

**Table 7A: The education system is declining %**



Gender: \*      Age group: \*\*      Social group: no sig.      Parental Status: parents: \*/grandparents: no sig.

Those Kuwaitis who are possibly still in the education system disagree the most with the statement – that is, they are the least negative about the system. The 51-65 age group, who agree the most that the system is declining, are the ones who are likely to be least exposed to it, whether as students or as parents – but also the ones with the longest memories of how it is previously. Interestingly, the split is identical for the social groups, even though respondents have different educational and cultural backgrounds. That could be because the system is centralised and schools have relatively the same standards.

The Day survey in the U.S. provides a contrast. As mentioned above, it found that the Wisconsin public's perception of public schools has become more favourable across recent decades. Also, when asked, "Which kind of school would do a better job teaching students the basics of reading, writing and math?" 42% picked public schools, compared to 31% for private schools.<sup>5</sup>

Any perceived defects in an education system may influence the standing of teachers. However, if the problem is seen as being the quality of teachers themselves, the impact on their standing is likely to be greater.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*



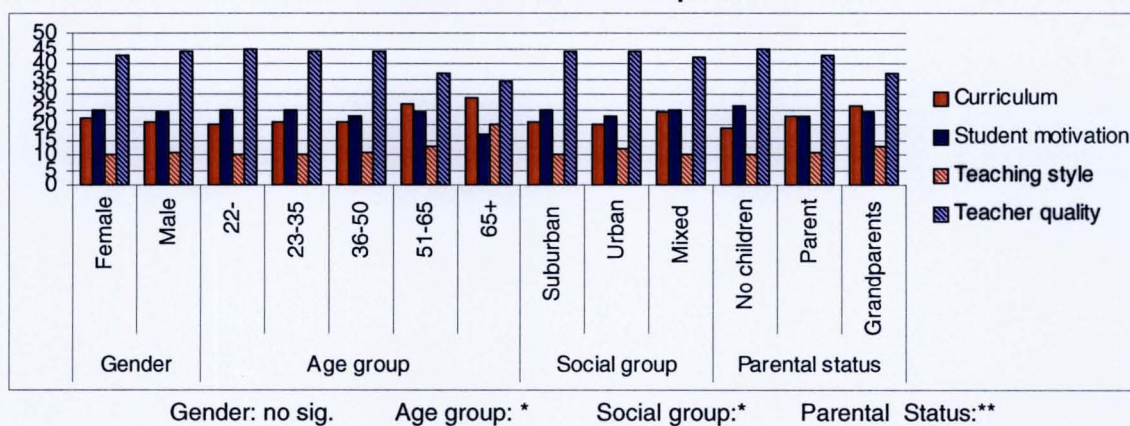
Table 8

The main educational problem we have in Kuwait %	Curriculum	Student motivation	Teaching style	Teacher quality	Total
Total	21%	24%	11%	44%	5011

Kuwaitis were asked, in a closed question, to identify the main educational problem. With four options provided, 44% chose the quality of teachers. Only 11% believe that teaching methods are the main educational problem, in spite of the fact that the didactic lecture (preceded and succeeded by short question and answer sessions) is the main teaching method, even in primary schools. The government's attempt in the 1990s to introduce more progressive child-centred teaching methods did not succeed, due to the massive resistance of the teachers. Perhaps the public themselves are content with the old-fashioned approach to teaching due to their past or current experience as students, and maybe they too would resist change if it is imposed.<sup>6</sup> The remainder of the sample, almost half, perceived either student motivation or the curriculum as the main problem.

Table 8A shows that there are no significant differences in views among the genders or the social groups. The 51+ age groups and the grandparents are the least likely to complain about the teachers' quality and the most likely to complain about teaching style and the curriculum. However, even for them teacher quality remains the most likely of the choices.

Table 8A: The main educational problem %



Perceptions of teacher quality in Kuwait may be related to perceptions of teachers' institutions. One approach which may clarify the connection, if any, is to distinguish the teachers that have graduated from Kuwaiti institutions from those who graduated elsewhere. So the sample was asked to indicate on a scale of four their agreement

<sup>6</sup> Alobaid, M., 2001, *Teachers conceptions of teaching in Kuwait*, MA dissertation, Institute of Education, London.



with the statement that “foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers”.

Table 9

Foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers %	Agree%	Disagree%	Total
Total	46%	54%	5010

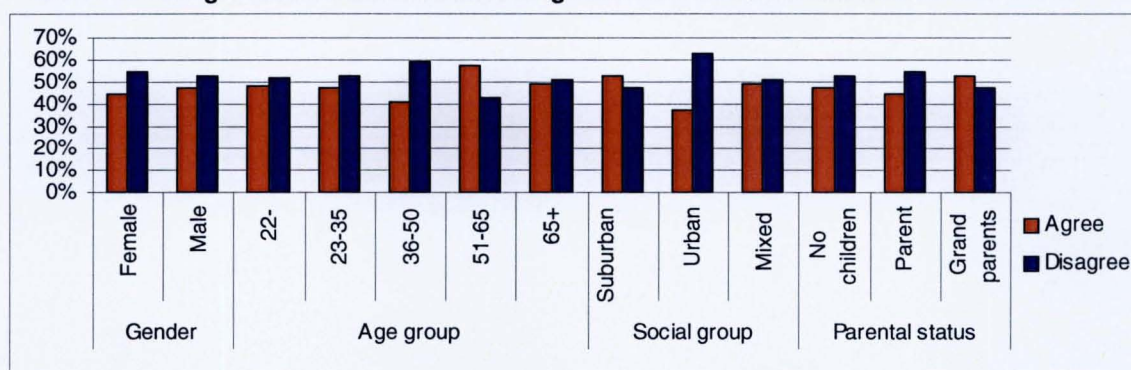
It seems that almost half the population agree with the statement; however the statement contains two adjectives (knowledgeable and dedicated) so that the public may agree with one part of the statement but not the other. This suggestion is raised in an unofficial focus group, and also in notes written on to their copy of the questionnaire by some respondents. Two of the notes are as follows:

*‘They are more knowledgeable for sure, but not more dedicated.’*

*‘I am not sure if this statement applies for the present day.’*

A sense of patriotism was shown by some respondents when they wrote comments next to their replies (not part of the questionnaire design). Also there were many revisions of the options, indicating respondents’ hesitations regarding this question. (Since respondents do not have the option of not deciding, they are forced to have an opinion.) Considering that Kuwaitis have a strong sense of citizenship and patriotism, the fact that 45% think that home-grown teachers are less knowledgeable and less dedicated than others should call attention to the teacher preparation programmes in Kuwaiti Colleges of Education. First, however, some significant variations in the responses to this question should be noted.

Table 9A: Foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers %



Gender: no sig. Age group: \*\* Social group: \*\* Parental Status: parents: no sig./ grandparents: \*\*

Across the four variables, the urbans tend to agree the least that foreign teachers are superior and the suburbans, the 51-56 age group and grandparents agree the most. The reason why the older generation may favour foreign teachers more is probably that they have been taught only or mainly by such teachers. As I have remarked,



Kuwait used to import an elite of highly paid teachers, as there is a demand and a desperate need to educate the illiterate nation. Perhaps some older citizens are loyal to their memories, or they may assume that the quality of foreign teachers in Kuwait is still as good as before. Parents in the 36-50 age group, especially urban parents, are more aware of the true quality of foreign teachers nowadays. They are paid much less than before, and much less than their Kuwaiti colleagues. Indeed, many believe that Kuwait now import the teachers who cannot get better contracts in other Gulf States, where they are still well paid.<sup>7</sup> Despite all this, the fact remains that almost half the population see them as better than Kuwaiti teachers.

### 3. Perceptions of teachers' education institutions

One intention of the research is to understand the influence of teachers' institutions on public conceptions of the status of teachers. This survey therefore examined public perceptions of the standing of these institutions. In the questionnaire, three items are designed to examine these:

- *Kuwait College of Basic Education has low status (agree/disagree)*
- *The College of Education has higher status than the College of Basic Education (agree/disagree)*
- *The main reason for Kuwaitis to become teachers is (salaries/ holidays/love of teaching /easy to become a teacher)*

These items are related in that they all represent the public's views of teacher education and of teachers' motivations or ideologies. The findings of this section will be linked to further investigations in later chapters.

**Table 10**

<b>The College of Basic Education has low status %</b>	<b>Agree%</b>	<b>Disagree%</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total	54%	46%	4997

Table 10 shows that the population is split down the middle, with more than half perceiving the College of Basic Education as low in status. Even though almost half disagree, this must be considered as a negative result for teachers and the College. If the question had offered three options – high, medium and low status – it might be that the proportion choosing 'low' would have been considerably reduced, and the overall result would favour medium status. But the analysis of the responses to this statement shows that Kuwaitis are slightly inclined to see the colleges' status as low.

<sup>7</sup> A comment by, the former Minister of Education, Dr Alrobaiy, for this research.



For all four variables, the differences in the distribution of opinions on this question are small and insignificant.

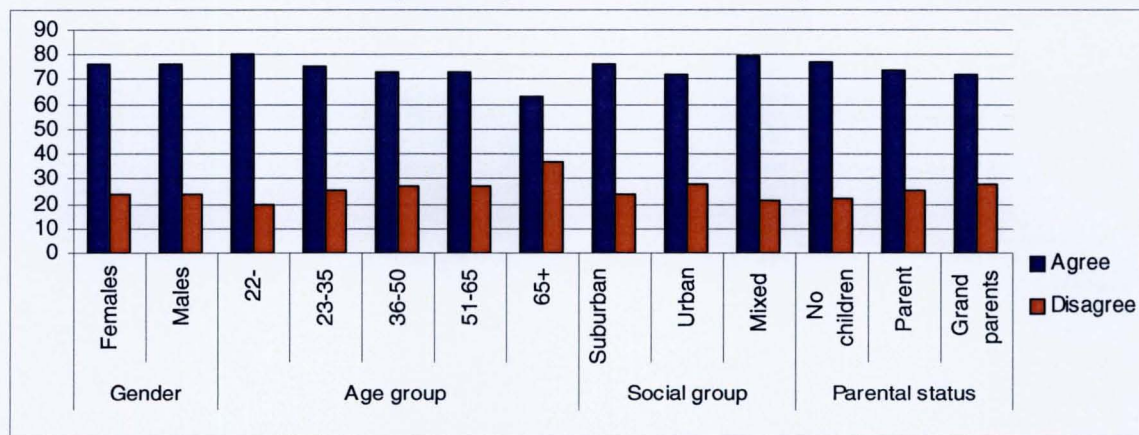
Kuwaitis are also asked to compare the status of the College of Basic Education with that of the Education College. As explained in Chapter One, the former prepares primary teachers and is part of the public organization for vocational education and training; the latter prepares secondary teachers and is under Kuwait University. Table 11 suggests that the public are aware of these differences.

**Table 11**

<b>The Education College has higher status than the College of Basic Education %</b>	Agree	Disagree	Total
Total	76%	24%	5001

Obviously, most Kuwaitis agree that the Education College has better status. This finding is expected, as vocational training organisations tend to have lower status than universities, and also because it is generally known that the entry score required for the College of Basic Education is lower than for the Education College. It is interesting that a quarter of the sample disagrees with the conventional view.

**Table 11A: The Education College has higher status than the College of Basic Education %**



Gender: no sig.    Age group: \*\*    Social group: \*\*    Parental Status: \*

Table 11A shows that the majority of Kuwaitis, from different backgrounds and with different experiences, agree that the College of Basic Education has an inferior status to the College of Education. Students aged 10-22 agree the most with the statement, and the small group of respondents aged 65+, disagree the most with it. The suburbans agree with it slightly more than the urbans. The distribution of views in each gender is (once again!) virtually identical.



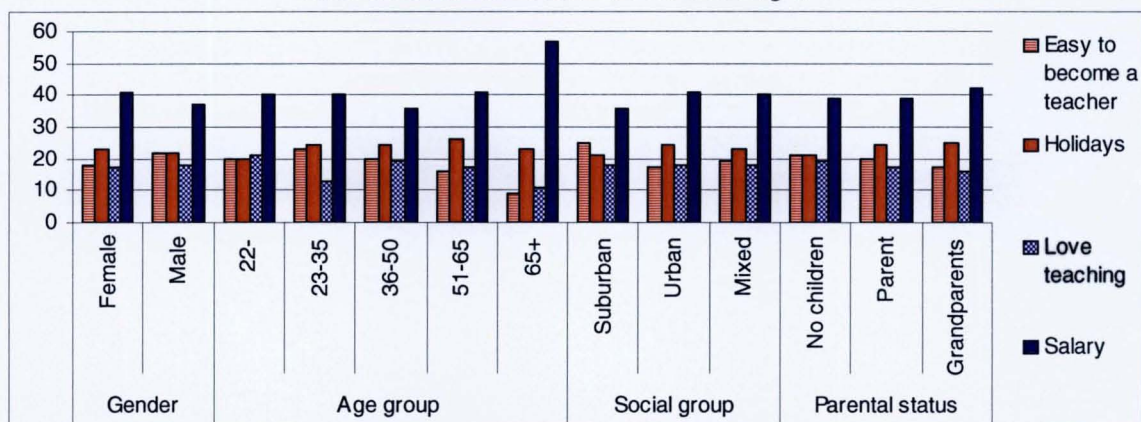
In an attempt to examine the public perception of the motivations of people who enter the teaching profession, respondents were asked to indicate, out of four options, their view on the main motivation.

**Table 12**

The main reason for Kuwaitis to become teachers is %	Easy to become a teacher	Holidays	Love teaching	Salary	Total
Total	20%	23%	18%	39%	5012

The results show that Kuwaitis mostly believe that teachers enter the profession for materialistic purposes. Less than 20% chose the only idealistic option. The finding suggests two scenarios; either the public are cynical in regard to teachers' ideologies and the results represent their negative views of teachers, or this is no more than Kuwaiti pragmatism and common-sense, and the public would view all career choices as reflecting similar career priorities.

**Table 12A: Perceived reasons for teaching %**



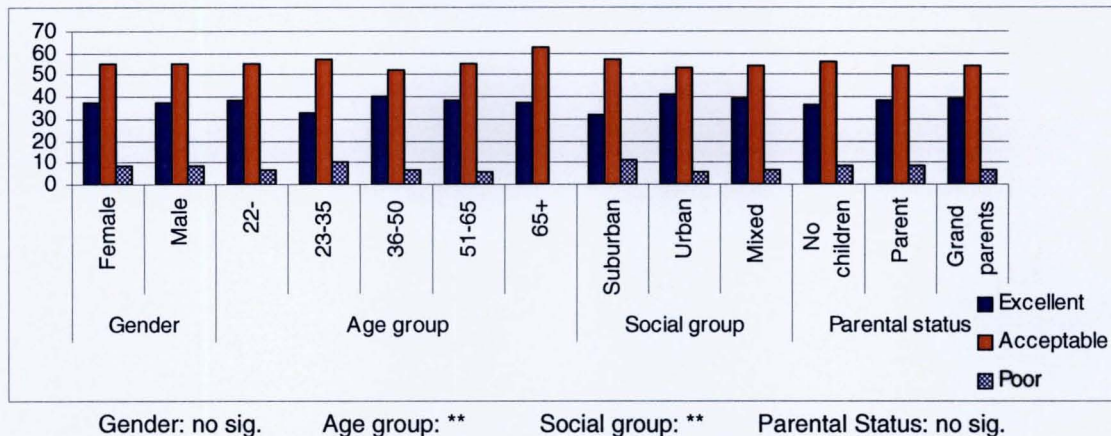
Gender: \*\* Age group: \*\* Social group: \*\* Parental Status: no sig.:

Kuwaitis in general, and in each sub-group, believe that the main reason for Kuwaitis to enter the teaching profession is its financial security. Older respondents particularly believe this. The urbans are more likely than suburbans to believe that teachers enter the teaching profession primarily for its salaries and secondly for the holidays. Their responses emphasise these two factors slightly more than those of other Kuwaitis. Suburbans also tend to believe that teachers enter the profession again mainly for its salary, but secondly because it is easy to become a teacher. Females believe more than males that teachers enter the profession for the salaries. This may be because teachers' salaries in Kuwait are high compared to others in the female career market. Males can more realistically hope to get better salaries elsewhere, especially in the oil industry where it is harder for females to enter.



Ninety-two per cent of Kuwaitis believe that teachers' work is excellent or acceptable. Kuwaitis seem comfortable with teachers' performance; only a small percentage is not satisfied with their work. This finding is not expected, mainly because so many parents are sending their children to private education, as they seem unsatisfied with public education. Also, because 44% of the public voted that the main educational problem this is 'teachers' quality'!

**Table 3A: Teachers' performance%**



There are no dramatic differences among the variables in these replies. The two genders' views on teachers' performance are identical. The 23-35 age group is the least satisfied about teachers' work: only 32% of them, compared to the general average of 37% across all groups think that teachers are doing an 'excellent' job, but the differences between age groups are either small or insignificant. Also, urbans are the most content with teachers' work (40% see it as excellent), and suburbans are the least content (31% chose 'excellent'), and this is the largest difference out of all four variables. It is perhaps surprising that Kuwaitis' views on teachers' performance are not affected by their parental status.

#### ▪ **Actual Respect**

Another way of measuring the standing of teachers is identifying the degree of respect for teachers held by the public. The sample was asked to identify the degree of their agreement with the statement that Kuwaitis respect teachers, on a scale of four.

**Table 4**

Kuwaitis respect teachers %	Agree	Disagree	Total
Total	68%	32%	5008

The result shows that the majority of the public view teachers as respected. More than twice as many people strongly agree with the statement than strongly disagree.

To summarise this part of the chapter: it has been revealed that the responses in the first category, those relating to 'respect, status, and performance', have been generally positive for teachers. Nevertheless, some negativity is observed in the views in the second category, those relating to 'teacher quality and the education system'. Here the public's view seems less positive. Also, the overall impressions left by the third category, 'perceptions of teacher preparation programmes', seem more pessimistic than optimistic. But perhaps the most significant finding in this section is how small the variable effects (with a few exceptions) are. As a researcher, I had stratified the sample on the assumption that the gender and social group differences, especially, would often be substantial. Surprisingly, for most of the questions, the replies for each gender are almost identical, and the social group differences, though sometimes statistically significant, are small. It will be investigated whether these variables will have a greater impact in the later surveys, which are directed more at 'insiders' of the education system: school-leavers, teachers and student-teachers.

### **Part Three: Further Analyses: Correlations between Pairs of Questions**

In this section, I consider a number of pairs of questions in order to locate some comparisons and contradictions that merit discussion. I shall cross-tabulate some or all of the response data relating to two questions in one table; for example: *how many Kuwaitis who think teachers are respected also think that teachers in Kuwait do an excellent job?* Also such pairs of questions can be reversed, for example: *how many Kuwaitis who think that teachers in Kuwait do an excellent job think they are respected?* The choice of pairs of questions is determined mainly by the sense of these questions (where the sense suggested probable or possible correlations), but also by using computer programmes to scrutinise all possible combinations for emergent correlations.<sup>8</sup>

#### **▪ Status in Kuwait defines respect**

One of the research sub-objectives is to comprehend the definition of status from Kuwaitis' perspective. Tables 13, 13A and 13B promote this by showing some correlations between perceptions of teachers' *status* and perceptions of the *respect* accorded to teachers. Together, they suggest that status determines respect more than respect determines status.

---

<sup>8</sup> I used a combination of SPSS and Excel.

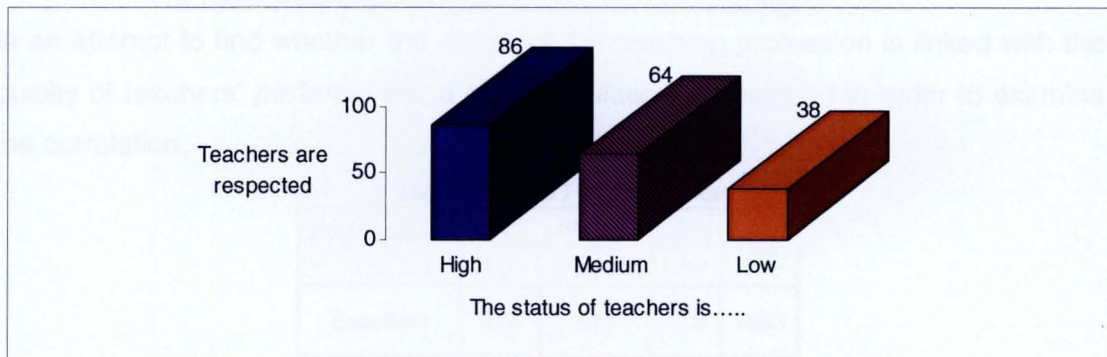


**Table 13: Status / Respect**

<i>Teachers are respected</i>	<i>Status</i>			Total
	High	Medium	Low	
Strongly agree	489	263	36	788
Agree	808	1633	162	2603
Disagree	163	884	190	1237
Strongly disagree	57	183	123	363
Total	1517	2963	511	4991

A correlation value of 0.35, significant at the 0.01 level, implies some link, though not a close one, between the two sets of perceptions. The next two tables pursue this further at the level of certain specific responses to the two questions.

**Table 13A: Status is high / medium / low  $\Rightarrow$  Respected %\*\***



As table 13A indicates, a progressive decline in the perceived status of teachers is accompanied by a progressive decline in their perceived respect. In other words, Kuwaitis who think that teachers' status is high tend most to see teachers as respected, and Kuwaitis who think that teachers' status is low tend the least to see teachers as respected. It seems, then, that respect does accompany status.

**Table 13B: Respected or not  $\Rightarrow$  Status is high /medium / low%\*\***

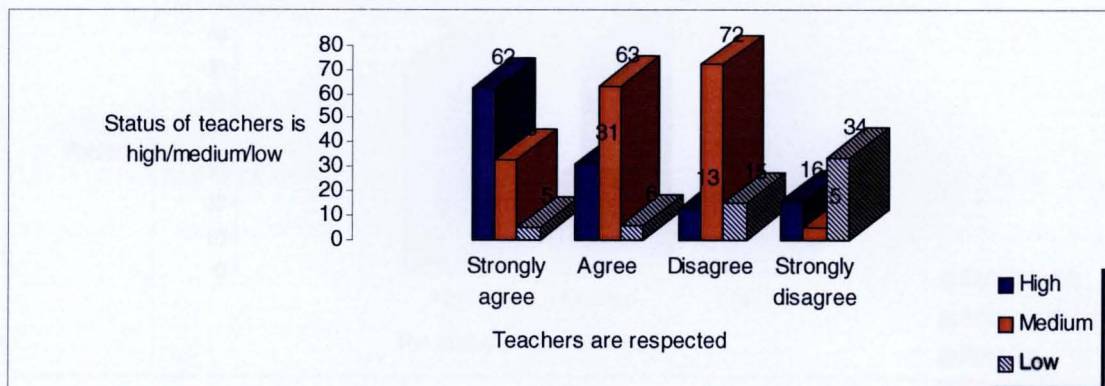


Table 13B shows that Kuwaitis who strongly believe that teachers are respected predominantly accord them high status. However, those who believe this less strongly join those who disagree with it, in predominantly believing that teachers' status is medium. And those who believe strongly that teachers are not respected still predominantly perceive teacher status as medium rather than as low. It seems then that status does not closely follow respect – at any rate apart from extreme positive viewpoints.

These findings suggest that the public respect for a profession does not necessarily mean that it is perceived as having high status, but if a profession is perceived as high-status, it will also be viewed as respected.

#### ▪ Status and performance

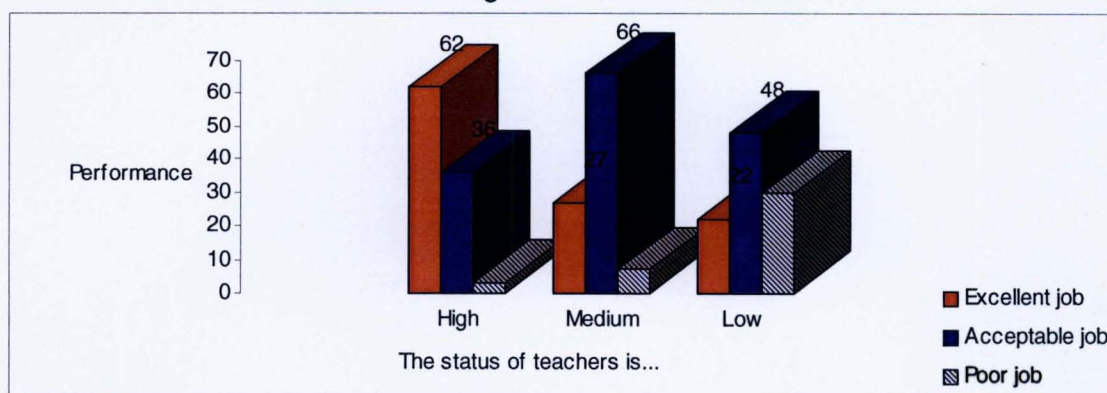
In an attempt to find whether the *status* of the teaching profession is linked with the quality of teachers' *performance*, a cross-tabulation is designed in order to examine the correlation.

**Table 14: Status / Performance**

Performance	Status			Total
	High	Medium	Low	
Excellent	936	814	113	1863
Acceptable	542	1946	245	2733
Poor	39	202	153	394
Total	1517	2962	511	4990

A correlation value of 0.35, significant at the 0.01 level, implies some link, though not a close one, between the two sets of perceptions. Tables 14A and 14B track this correlation further by testing the effect of each perception on the other.

**Table 14A: Status is high/medium/low  $\Rightarrow$  Performance %\*\***





As demonstrated in Table 14A, a progressive decline in teachers' perceived performance is accompanied by a progressive decline in their perceived status. In other words, Kuwaitis who think that teachers' status is high tend most to perceive them as doing an excellent job, and Kuwaitis who think that teachers' status is low tend the most to perceive teachers as doing a poor job.

**Table 14B: Performance  $\Rightarrow$  Status is high /medium / low %\*\***

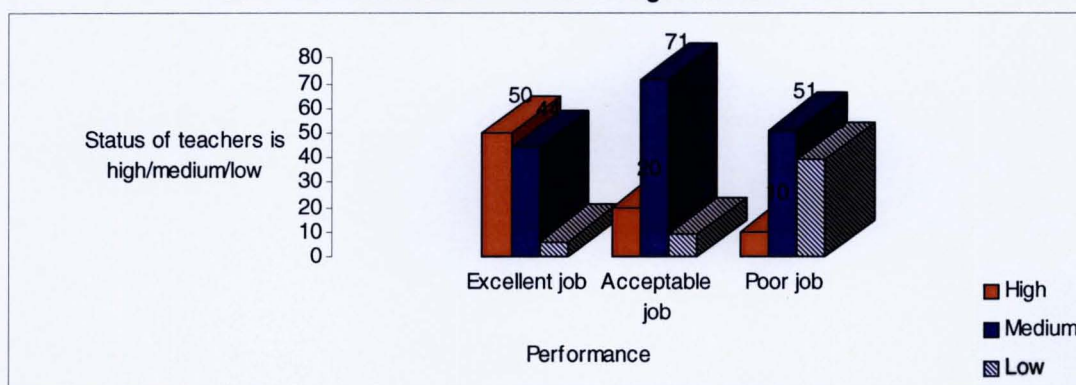


Table 14B shows that Kuwaitis who believe that teachers' performance is acceptable, predominantly believe that teachers' status is medium. Also those who believe that teachers' performance is excellent accord them high to medium status. Those who believe that teachers' performance is poor accord them medium to low status. It seems therefore, that status does follow performance.

If there is an association between the status of a profession and its performance, the link is not rigid, as perceiving high status does not always mean perceiving excellent performance. Yet comparing tables 14A and 14B shows that 62% of Kuwaitis who perceive teachers as having high status believe that teachers do an excellent job, and 50% of Kuwaitis who believe that teachers do an excellent job perceive teachers as having high status. This suggests that the status of teachers could affect the public perceptions of their performance more than their perceived performance affects their status.

#### ▪ **Respect and performance**

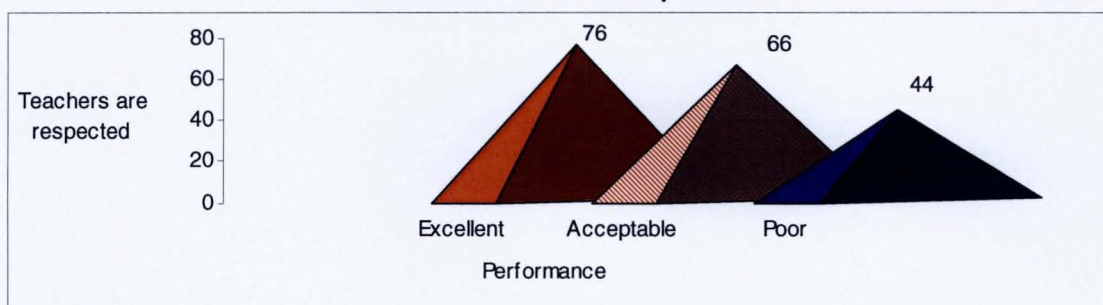
The respect for a profession is expected to be associated to some extent with the quality of its work. Tables 15, 15A, and 15B illustrate the link between the public's views on the quality of teachers' *performance* and their belief on the degree of *respect* that teachers have.

**Table 15: Performance / Respect**

<i>Teachers are respected</i>	Performance			Total
	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor	
Strongly agree	493	266	28	787
Agree	928	1527	145	2600
Disagree	334	753	150	1237
Strongly disagree	107	183	72	362
Total	1862	2729	395	4986

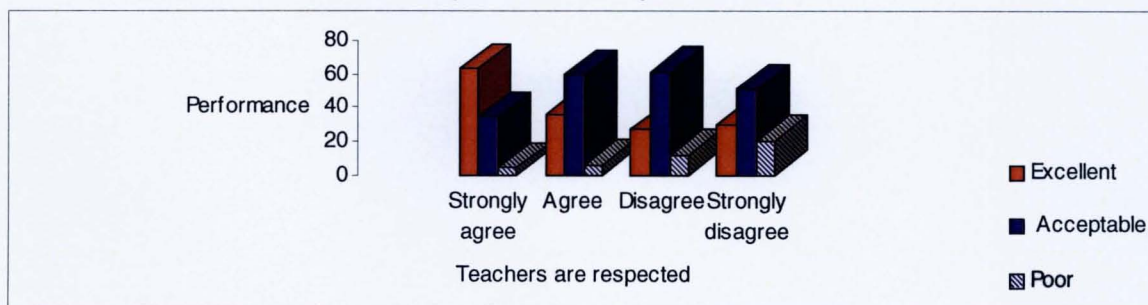
The correlation shown in Table 15 between the public respect for teachers and teacher's performance is calculated as 0.23 significant at the 0.01 level. However, this correlation is small. Tables 15A and 15B illustrate this correlation further by testing the effect of each perception on the other.

**Table 15A: Performance  $\Rightarrow$  Respected % \*\***



The table shows an association between respect and performance, yet this association is not an absolute. There is a gradual decline in perceived respect, corresponding with a decline in the perceived performance; nevertheless, 44% of people who believe that teachers do poor work still believe that teachers are respected, and 24% of people who believe that teachers do excellent work believe that teachers are not respected. This could be due to the fact that the question regarding respect for teachers is not directed to the respondents' own opinion, as it offered 'teachers in Kuwait are respected'. The correlation could be greater if the respondents were asked if *they* respect teachers.

**Table 15B: Respected or not  $\Rightarrow$  performance%\*\***





In this table, the extreme responses in regard to teachers' perceived respect are correlated with strong views on their performance. Respondents with moderate views on teachers perceived respect (those who chose 'agree' or 'disagree') have very similar views in regard to teachers' performance. Also, the majority of Kuwaitis who believe that teachers are not respected are pleased with teachers' performance. Perhaps Kuwaitis do not necessarily respect professions on the basis of their performance. Nevertheless, as the 'poor job' columns show, there is a graduation of dissatisfaction with teachers' performance that corresponds with the low levels of respect.

▪ **Actual status and deserving better status**

Ninety-one percent of Kuwaitis believe that teachers in Kuwait deserve a better status. The correlations among those who take this view will be investigated, in relation to their perceptions on teachers' status, respect, and performance. The links between the public perceptions of teachers' performance, respect for them has already been established , and the status of teachers. Table 16 shows what the public considers the most when voting for better status for teachers.

**Table 16: Status, Performance, and Respect⇒ Support for teachers' better status%\*\***

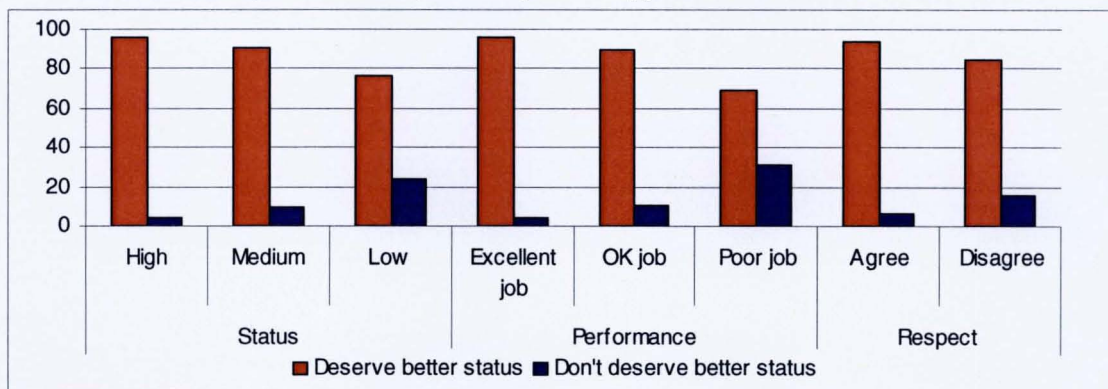


Table 16 illustrates a correlation of 0.15 between the public's perceived respect for teachers and their support for better status for teachers, and a correlation of 0.19 between the public perceptions of the status of teachers and their support for better status. But the highest correlation is 0.31, between judgments of teachers' performance and the public support for better status. All three correlations are significant at the 0.01 level.

Predictably, respondents with negative views on all three issues (teachers have low status/do a poor job/ are not respected) are the ones who disagree the most that teachers deserve better status. And those with positive perceptions in all three areas



are the ones who most support better status for them. Yet the associations are not dramatic. The dramatic finding remains the public respect for the *role* of teacher, since clear majorities of those with negative perceptions of the status of teachers, the performance of teachers, and the respect in which they are held still believe teachers deserve better status.

#### ▪ The outcomes

Many of the public seem to have negative views in regard to teachers' quality. Many believe that the main educational problem in Kuwait is teachers' quality; they also tend to believe that teachers enter the profession for the sake of the salary and holidays, and because it is easy to become a teacher. Their views may be affected by their views on teachers' performance. Tables 17, 17A, and 17B investigate the correlations between the public perceptions of the *main educational problem*, *teachers' performance*, and *why teachers enter the profession*.

**Table 17: Main Educational problem  $\Rightarrow$  Reasons for teaching %\*\***

Main Educational problem \ Reasons for teaching	Easy to become a teacher	Holidays	Love teaching	Salary	Total
Curriculum	16%	28%	20%	36%	100%
Student motivation	21%	19%	21%	39%	100%
Teaching style	16%	25%	22%	37%	100%
Teachers' quality	23%	22%	15%	40%	100%

This table is to be read horizontally

Table 17 suggests that those who perceive the quality of teachers as the main educational problem are slightly more cynical than others in their assumptions in regard to what attracts teachers to the profession. It is interesting now to consider these respondents' views on teachers' performance.

**Table 17A: Main educational problem  $\Rightarrow$  Performance %\*\***

Main educational problem \ Performance	Excellent job	Acceptable job	Poor job	Total
Curriculum	45%	51%	3%	100%
Student motivation	44%	50%	6%	100%
Teaching style	40%	55%	5%	100%
Teachers quality	29%	59%	12%	100%

This table is to be read horizontally

Table 17A shows that those who are not content with teachers' quality are indeed less likely than others to think teachers "do an excellent job". However, nearly 60% of them still believe that they "do an acceptable job". The question here is why so many Kuwaitis are not happy with teachers' quality, though they still believe that



teachers seem to “do an acceptable job”? Perhaps, for many Kuwaitis, an acceptable job, or merely average efficiency, is not enough.

**Table 17B: Reasons for teaching⇒ Main educational problem %\*\***

Main educational problem Reasons for teaching	Main educational problem				
	Curriculum	Student motivation	Teaching style	Teacher quality	Total
Easy to become a teacher	17%	25%	8%	50%	100%
Holidays	26%	21%	12%	41%	100%
Love teaching	23%	29%	13%	35%	100%
Salary	20%	25%	10%	45%	100%

This table is to be read horizontally

On the other hand, as table 17B shows, those Kuwaitis who believe that teachers enter the profession because they love teaching are the least likely, by a small but significant difference in percentages, to complain about teachers' quality.

The table offers another interesting finding: those Kuwaitis, who believe that teachers enter the profession because it is easy to become a teacher, are the least satisfied with the quality of teachers.

#### ▪ The status of teachers' institutions in Kuwait

The public perceives teachers' institutions as having a humble status, although the secondary teachers' preparation programme is perceived as having better status than the primary programme. The public views on the Education College are not fully identified. The status of the Education College is higher than that of the College of Basic Education, but that does not mean that the former is perceived as having high status. The correlation between the responses for the two questions regarding the teachers' institutions shall be investigated. This investigation may further clarify public perceptions of the Education College.

**Table 18 Status of College of Basic Education / Education College**

College of Basic Education has low status	Education College has higher status				Total
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
Strongly agree	312	186	40	13	551
Agree	743	1120	239	27	2129
Disagree	350	811	552	73	1786
Strongly disagree	115	141	113	141	510
Total	1520	2258	944	254	4976

The correlation shown in table 18 between the public views of both colleges is calculated as 0.34, significant at the 0.01 level. More specific calculations (see Appendix H, Tables 18A, and 18B) show that only 12% of respondents who perceive

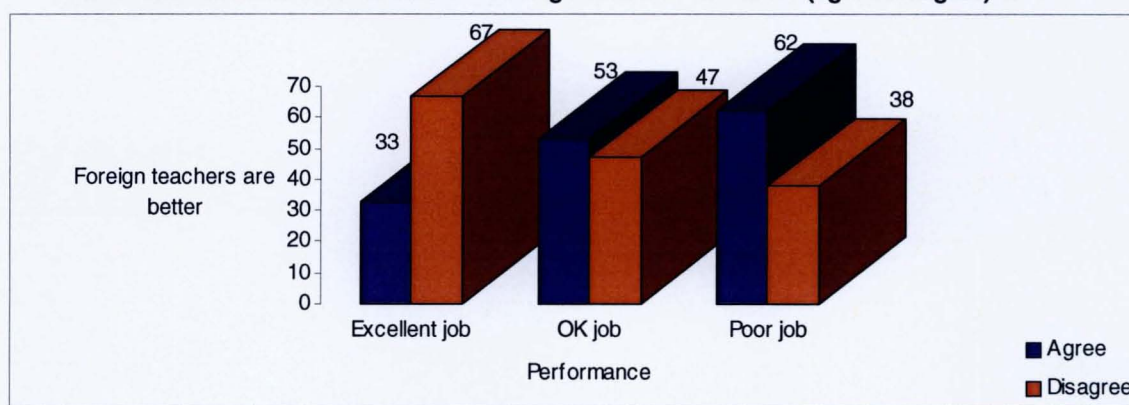


the College of Basic Education as having low status disagree that the Education College has a higher status. The other 88% represent 47% of the total sample. In other words, nearly half of all Kuwaitis believe that the primary teachers' college has low status and, also, that this is lower than that of the secondary teachers' college. Moreover, 6% of Kuwaitis believe that both colleges are low in status and 17% believe that neither college has low status.

#### ▪ Kuwaitis' perceptions of foreign teachers

With the hypothesis that the more Kuwaitis are unhappy with teachers' work, the more they may favour foreign teachers, a table is designed to investigate the connection.

**Table 19: Performance of teachers ⇒ Foreign teachers are better (agree/disagree) %\*\***



There is a correlation of  $-0.2$  between how Kuwaitis scale teachers' performance and their perceptions of foreign teachers. The table clearly shows that the less happy they are with teachers' performance, the more likely they are to favour foreign teachers. Also, those who do not believe that foreign teachers are better are more likely to be content with teachers' performance. The data, therefore, tend to confirm the hypothesis.

#### ▪ University students' perceptions of the standing of teachers

The 400 university respondents who took part in the distribution of the survey are identifiable as a separate group. Their opinions on the standing of teachers are slightly different from those of other groups. A comparison is presented in Table 19.



**Table 19: Public / University responses compared**

<i>The questionnaire</i>	<i>Public reply%</i>			<i>University reply%</i>		
	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Agree%</b>	<b>Disagree%</b>	
Kuwaitis respect teachers	68%	32%		60%	40%	
The Kuwait College of Basic Education has low status	<b>54%</b>	46%		<b>60%</b>	40%	
The Education College has much higher status than College of Basic Education	<b>76%</b>	24%		<b>91%</b>	9%	
Teachers in Kuwait deserve to have better status	91%	9%		94%	6%	
Foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers	46%	54%		<b>52%</b>	48%	
The education system in Kuwait is declining	55%	45%		<b>63%</b>	37%	
Status of teachers in Kuwait is	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Low</b>
	<b>30%</b>	59%	10%	<b>21%</b>	69%	10%
Teachers in Kuwait do	<b>Excellent job</b>	<b>OK job</b>	<b>Poor job</b>	<b>Excellent job</b>	<b>OK job</b>	<b>Poor job</b>
	<b>37%</b>	55%	8%	<b>22%</b>	73%	6%
The main educational problem in Kuwait	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Student motivation</b>	<b>Teaching style</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Teaching methods</b>
	21%	24%	11%	29%	22%	10%
The main reason for Kuwaitis to become teachers is	<b>Easy</b>	<b>Holidays</b>	<b>Love teaching</b>	<b>Easy to be a teacher</b>	<b>Holidays</b>	<b>Love teaching</b>
	20%	23%	18%	18%	31%	7%
			39%			44%

Replies differ most over teachers' status and that of teachers' institutions. University students are less likely to think that teachers in Kuwait do an excellent as opposed to an OK job, or that their status is high as opposed to medium. Also, they tend to favour foreign teachers more than the other groups. Again, their 'preference' for the status of the Education College over the status of the College of Basic Education is more marked (and, considering that these respondents are the ones who have entered higher education, perhaps their opinion in this area matters the most).

#### **Part Four: Proposals for Respondent Profiles**

In this section I shall investigate the respondents' overall views in regard to the items of the questionnaire, using the seven out of the ten items where the responses can be categorised as positive or negative for Kuwaiti teachers and their status. Those items are:

- *Kuwaitis respect teachers*
- *Kuwait College of Basic Education has low status*
- *Teachers deserve to have better status*



- *Foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers.*
- *The level (standard) of the educational system in Kuwait is declining*
- *Teachers do excellent / ok / poor job*
- *The status of teachers is high / medium / low.*

The purpose was to find out what proportions of the public hold *consistently* or *near-consistently* positive or negative views about teachers and their status. They could be then contrasted with the number holding more mixed views that are positive in some cases and negative in other cases, and/or that are inclined to the medium option (neither positive nor negative) where it is available. For this exercise, 'extreme' and 'moderate' responses were combined: 'agree' with 'strongly agree', and 'strongly disagree' with 'disagree'. The intermediate responses permitted in the two final items above ('an ok job' and 'medium status') were interpreted as 'middle'.

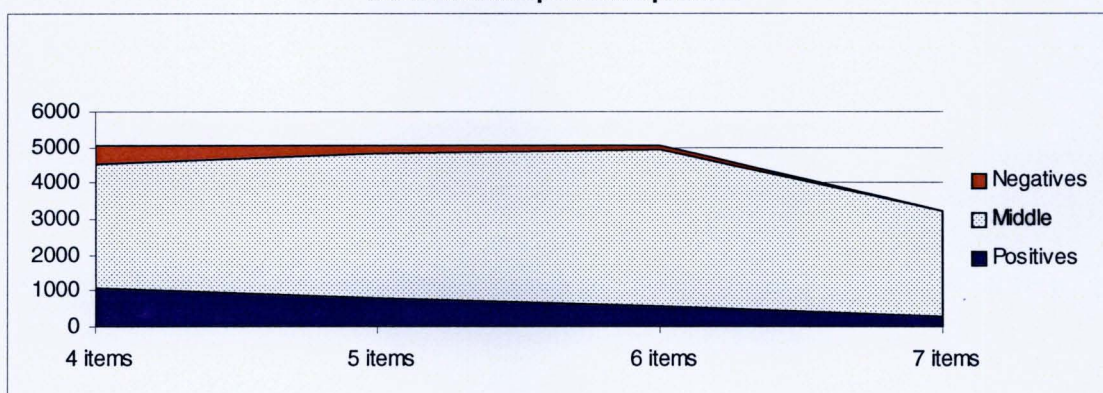
Table 20 identifies the respondents who offered consistently positive or negative responses in from a minimum of four up to all seven items. The remainder in the 'middle' column are those whose responses were more mixed and more inclined to the middle road (when it was offered in the two final items).

**Table 20: Respondent Profiles**

Numbers of items	Positives	Middle	Negatives
4 items	1070 (21%)	3431(68%)	522(10%)
5 items	783(16%)	4052 (81%)	188 (4%)
6 items	538 (11%)	4412 (88%)	73 (1%)
7 items	276 (6%)	4929 (93%)	18 (0.3%)

Selecting the first and least strong of these definitions of consistently positive and negative, reveals that out of every 10 Kuwaitis, there will be on average 2 with overall positive views of teachers and their status, 1 with overall negative views, and 7 with mixed views.

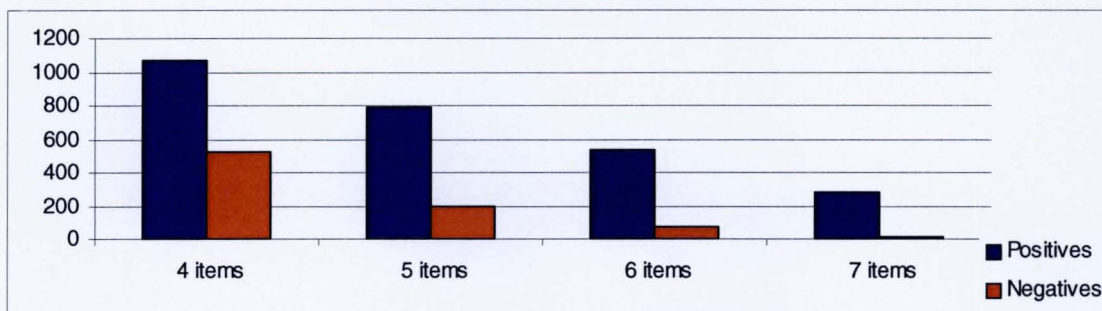
**Table 20A: Respondents profiles**





Of course, the 'middle' is the majority. Depending on how strong the definition of consistency, the 'inconsistent' middle varies from at least 68% to at most 93% of the sample. Table 20A represents these findings in a way which particularly illustrates this strength of the middle.

**Table 20B: respondents' attitudes**



The number of consistent positives is always much greater than the number of consistent negatives, as more graphically illustrated in Table 20B. Also, the stricter the definition of consistency, the greater the proportionate difference, from 2:1 (21% compared to 10%) on the least strict definition to 20:1 (6% compared to 0.3%) on the most strict definition. This important point has the effect of fitting with other evidence that the Kuwaiti public's overall view of teachers and their status is tilted a little towards the positive.

**Table 20C: Lunatic Fringes**

Numbers of added items	Extreme positives	Positives	Negatives	Extreme negatives
Views on any 5 items	181 (3.5%)	783 (16%)	188 (3.5%)	38 (0.7%)
Views on any 6 items	77 (1.5%)	538 (11%)	73 (1%)	12 (0.2%)
Views on 7 any items	16 (0.3%)	276 (6%)	18 (0.3%)	2 (0.03%)

In one final variation, 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree' were counted separately from 'agree' and 'disagree' to identify what could be called 'the lunatic fringes', those with consistently extreme positive or negative views. Table 20C shows that there are only small numbers of such 'extremists', but also that the consistently positive citizens continue to outnumber the consistently negative citizens at these extremes. Only two respondents out of 5023 gave seven extreme negative responses, while 16 respondents gave seven extreme positive responses.

## Summary

Kuwaitis view teachers as having only medium status, though tilting more towards high than low (mean 2.2). Teachers are generally respected and the public as a whole are fairly content with their performance. However, almost half (46%, but more suburbans than urbans) think non-native teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers. More than half of the public think education in

Kuwait is in decline. And more than two out of five consider that the quality of teachers is the main educational problem in Kuwait. They also believe that teachers enter the profession for pragmatic reasons and not for the love of teaching.

The highest level of agreement for any of the ten items in the questionnaire, is that 9 out of 10 Kuwaitis believe that teachers deserve a better status, and this belief is regardless of gender, social group, age-group and family status. This 91% consensus includes clear majorities of those who have negative perceptions of the status of teachers, the performance of teachers, and the respect in which they are held. It should be interpreted as public respect for *the role* of teaching.

Just over half the population view the College of Basic Education (for preparing primary teachers) as having low status, and three-quarters consider that the Education College (for secondary teacher preparation) enjoys a much higher status. This may be seen as bad news for the first College without necessarily being good news for the second College.

University students are slightly more negative / critical than the population as a whole in their judgments about teachers and their status.

I have investigated public views, taking account of four variables within the sample: gender, age group, parental status, and social status. I had expected to find some major differences in opinions amongst the variables, especially between urban and suburban social groups where they have different cultural and value systems. However, the patterns of viewpoints on teachers and teaching held within all these divisions in the society are remarkably similar to each other and to the patterns of the Kuwaiti public as a whole. That is to say, the variable effects studied were surprisingly small.

By constructing a respondents' profile, it was found that when it comes to those with unusually strong and consistent views on teachers, there are many more very positive Kuwaitis than very negative Kuwaitis.

These findings will be compared in later chapters with those from the surveys carried out of school leavers, teachers, and student teachers.



## Chapter Five: Survey of School-leavers' Opinions

### Introduction

This chapter investigates Kuwaiti school-leavers' perceptions of teacher status, their views of their own potential career options and their views of teaching as a career option. Evidence will also be offered regarding the academic quality of those who are thinking of entering the teaching profession.

320 students (4% of the annual cohort of school-leavers) took part in this survey; the questionnaires were distributed at eight secondary schools, with a 100% return rate. The allocation and collection of the questionnaires has been explained in Chapter Three. Tables 1, 1A and 1B represent the structure of the sample in summary form.

Table 1

Urban (160 students)				Suburban (160 students)			
Female (80 students)		Male (80 students)		Female (80 students)		Male (80 students)	
American system	Normal system	American system	Normal system	American system	Normal system	American system	Normal system
40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

Table 1A

Speciality	Males	Females	American	Normal	Urban	Suburban	Total
Humanities	73	126	107	92	96	103	199
Science	87	34	53	68	64	57	121

Table 1B

Latest GPA or Year Score	Females	Males	Total
A	43(27%)	28(17%)	71
B	52(33%)	56(35%)	108
C	52(33%)	56(35%)	108
D	13(8%)	20(13%)	33

The tables quantify the five significant variables in this survey, and some of the correlations between them. Figures for four of the variables were confirmed or gathered from the general information section of the questionnaire: questions 1-4 (gender, school system, specialist subject, and year score). The fifth variable (social group) was reasonably deduced from the schools' locations.

The quantities for each variable are highly significant, not only for the justification of the sample, but to identify the types of students who are planning to enter the teaching profession. Understanding the nature and the quality of the input to teachers' institutions is integrally connected with the research questions. Examining students' backgrounds, gender, year scores, specialities, and the type of school which they attend also facilitates further investigations in later chapters.

The gender, school system and social group factors were fully controlled, with equal numbers of the two alternatives in each case. Dividing the sample into students from the two secondary education systems, 'American' and 'normal', was a necessary precaution in the interests of generalisation, though in fact the differences between their responses turned out to be generally negligible. The students' year scores were highly important to the sample, both to identify the academic quality of those students considering teaching as a career and, more generally, to correlate views on teacher status and teaching as a career with the respondents' own status as students. Table 1B shows that there are more 'B' and 'C' students in the sample than 'A' and 'D' students. This distribution broadly reflects the actual national pattern of the students in schools, as questionnaire copies were distributed to all the students in the selected mixed-ability classrooms.

Table 1A shows that the broad speciality categories of 'sciences' and 'humanities'<sup>1</sup> are not equally represented *in the sample* due to the circumstances of the original distribution of the questionnaires in the schools, nor is it possible to guarantee that they are present in the same proportions as among school-leavers generally. Thus, it is not possible to generalise from the sample to all school-leavers in these two respects. My purpose is not to create either equal or proportionate numbers of students of each speciality, but simply to ensure a sufficient number of students (of both genders) in each speciality to permit comparison of their views on teacher status and teaching as a career.<sup>2</sup>

The responses to the 27 items in the questionnaire for the school-leavers will be analysed as follows:

- Tables 2 and 2A, will present the general responses for all the items. These tables facilitate comparisons with the findings of the other surveys in previous and later chapters. Their immediate purpose here, however, is to generate some overall picture of the school-leavers' views.

---

<sup>1</sup> I have categorized students who specialise in business as 'humanities', which is a very popular option for students in the American system.

<sup>2</sup> In each type of school, two classes are selected to fill the questionnaire, since the average class size is 27 pupils. Generally, I distributed copies of the questionnaire to all pupils in the first classroom and the remainder up to 40 randomly in the second classroom. In the American system, students are selected mainly from core and some elective classes attended by both science and humanities students. In the Normal system, where humanity and science students stay in separate classrooms, students are selected from both kinds of classroom.

- The items of the questionnaire will then be analysed and discussed in some depth and in four groups. The main focus in this second section will be on the variable effects. As well as tabulating responses by individual variables, cross tabulations of variables will be made where interesting elements for discussion emerge. Here, some additional student comments, gathered both from responses to the one open question on the questionnaire and from informal discussions during the administration of the questionnaires, will be used sparingly.
- The final section will move on to arrange some items into clusters where the meanings of the questions can be taken to overlap with each other, and then, to assess and discuss the degrees of correlation among respondents for these items. In this section, too, a comparison will be made with a partly similar survey in England, and the open-ended responses to the question 'why do/don't you want to become a teacher?' will be systematically presented.

### **Part One: The Overall Picture**

Table 2A presents the responses of the 89 school-leavers in the sample who are considering teaching as a career in regard to the importance of 11 identified influences on their thinking. First, however Table 2 presents the responses of all 320 students to all the other questionnaire items.<sup>3</sup> All the figures are presented in percentages.

The first finding is that 85% of the respondents are planning for higher education. Kuwaitis are mostly determined to get a university qualification. This is an expected finding for a society that places high value on formal qualifications. Furthermore, 5% out of the 8% definitely not planning for higher education are planning to join either the military or the police force, both of which are selective in varying degrees and involve a considerable amount of further education.

---

<sup>3</sup> The sequence of the items differs from that in the actual questionnaire.

Table 2: Overall Picture

Questionnaire Items				School-leavers' responses																		
Considering higher education		Yes				No				Undecided												
		85				8				8												
Considering teaching		28				72				0												
Most likely careers	Doctor	Lawyer	Engineer		Business		Police	Military		Teacher	Others											
	15	20	21		2		4	1		30	6											
Main reason to become a teacher*	Salary	Work load	Holidays		Career progress		Gender division	Prestige	Challenging		Easy to get a job	Easy to become a teacher										
	42	0	36		0		11	8	0		2	2										
Main reason for not becoming a teacher	Salary		Work load		Career progress		Gender division		Lack of prestige		Not challenging		Supervision									
	2		40		4		2		43		0		9									
Teachers are appreciated in Kuwait					Yes		Don't know		Not much		No											
					24		7		29		40											
Teaching require special skills and expertise					56		4		24		17											
Teaching is uninteresting but pays well			Strongly agree		Agree		Sub total Agree		Hesitant		Sub total Disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree							
			14		41		55		19		26		18		8							
Higher status could attract teachers			22		46		68		21		11		9		2							
Teachers' Prestige is equal to other university graduate occupations			8		19		27		23		49		39		10							
Teacher status is low in comparison to other university graduate occupations			16		46		62		12		26		20		6							
The most honourable profession		Teachers		Doctor s		Clerics		Lawyers		Police Officers		Political Leaders		Others								
		5		28		13		11		13		17		15								
The most prestigious profession		5		31		8		15		10		29		4								
College of Basic Education has high status			Strongly agree		Agree		Sub total Agree		Hesitant		Sub total Disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree							
			5		15		20		23		57		43		14							
Academically able students are likely to enter teacher education			6		14		20		18		62		41		21							
The status of teachers on a scale of ten			1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10	
			4		6		11		13		19		17		12		14		1		2	

The questions used to identify the school-leavers' views on the status of teachers differ in style. Some items are indirectly associated with teacher status. Others are direct questions, where respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions of the status of teachers on a scale of 10, or to compare teacher status with that of other professions. In the indirect questions, students were asked if teachers are appreciated, and 69% of the sample give a negative response. Students were also

\* This item was designed only for students who are considering teaching

asked if teaching requires skills and expertise; 41% of the sample gave a broadly negative response. On a scale of 1 to 10, most views of teacher status lay between 3 and 8 and the mean is 5.2. That broad range of responses could be due to the uncertainty when there is no comparative context in the question. In comparison with other named professions, however, school-leavers are least likely of all to identify teaching as either the most honourable or the most prestigious profession. Two-thirds believe that teachers have a lower status than those in other professions. In regard to the perceived disadvantages of teaching, lack of prestige appears to be the most negative factor and a perception of a relatively heavy workload the second most negative.

Over half (55%) of the sample agree with the 'double' statement that 'teaching is not interesting but it pays well', and only just over a quarter (26%) disagree.

Finally, there is a high level of scorn for teacher education. Almost two-thirds of the respondents have a negative view of it and an additional 20% are hesitant in their views.

So far, the data presented suggest that school-leavers are overall quite strongly negative in their views on the status of teachers. However, a different and more positive first impression is created by the fact that 30% of the respondents are considering teaching as a career.

Of that sub-sample, 78% identify either salaries or long holidays as the main attraction of teaching and none chose the 'challenge' aspect of the profession as its main attraction. This sub-sample was also asked to evaluate the impact of 11 specified influences on their interest in teaching, using a 5-point scale. This set of questions permit the sub-sample to provide a more complex assessment of their own motivations. Responses have been averaged and are presented in order of their popularity in Table 2A (overleaf). The material considerations of salary and job security stand out as strong positive influences. The working conditions and the flexibility that fits with family life also scored highly, and students' desire to work with their favourite subject is also an important influence. Overall, Table 2A shows that these students have both materialistic and altruistic motives.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> These influences will be compared with another study in a later section of this chapter.

Table 2A

Influences in considering teaching on a scale of 1 to 5	Mean
Teachers' salaries	4.5
Teacher's likely job security	4.5
Continuing to work with your subject	4
Teachers' working conditions	4
School terms fit with being a parent	4
Interest with working with children	3.8
Teachers' likely career progression	3.8
How well you are doing in school	3.7
Good teaching you experienced as a pupil	3.7
Your perceptions of other careers	3.5
Poor teaching you experienced as a pupil	2.8
Averages of the means	3.8

The items in Table 2A are answered ONLY by the 30% school-leavers who are considering teaching as a career.

What can now be noticed from the data presented in Tables 2 and 2A together is that the overall school-leavers' view seems substantially more negative than positive for teaching as a profession. Comparing it with the public opinion survey, the public seems to have moderately more positive perceptions of the actual work and status of teachers. For example, school-leavers give a poor rating to the role of teacher itself inasmuch as over 40% of them believe that teaching does not require special skills and expertise. Perhaps this result reflects the students' naïve ideas about teaching.

School-leavers appear to have moderately positive perceptions of the actual career package. Their perceptions in this respect are comparable with the public perceptions. In both surveys; an emphasis on the materialistic motives for teaching is perceptible.

These are 'first impressions', needing further investigation and refinement later in the chapter.

### **Part Two: Tabulations and Analyses of Groups of Individual Questions**

In order to analyse the responses further, the items of the questionnaire are grouped into the following four categories: *all students' career aspirations and choices*; *those who are considering teaching*; *the generally perceived status of teachers in comparison to other careers*; and *attitudes towards teacher education institutions*.

For most tables, the columns show the data in percentages, as this makes it easier to identify significant and insignificant differences. Supplementary graphs will show some cross-tabulations of the variables.

### 1. All students' career aspirations and choices

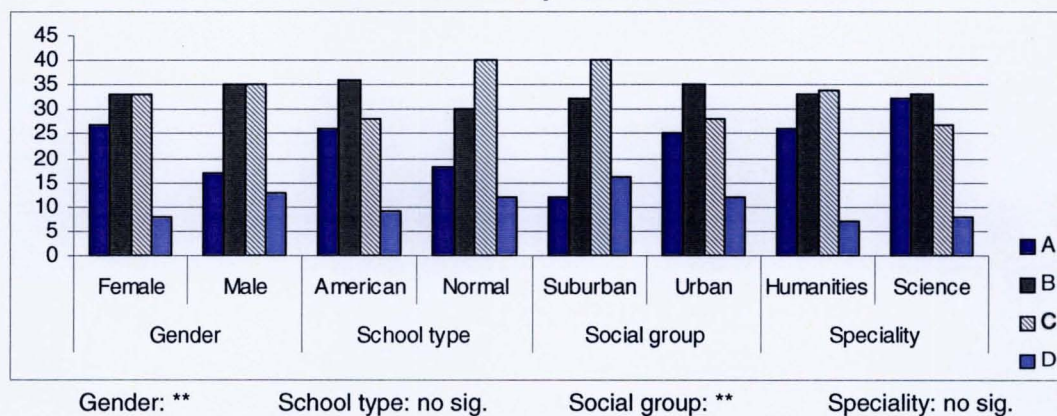
From the general information section (showing year scores, gender, specialities, social group, and school system) and, also, from the students' responses in regard to their career options, some interesting results are observed. Three items in the questionnaire are explored to examine nuances in their attitudes towards further education and careers. Those items are:

- Year scores (A, B, C, D)
- Considering higher education (yes/no/ undecided)
- The careers being considered (a semi-open question)

#### Year scores

Students were invited to indicate their year score, partly to examine the status of teachers as perceived by those with different academic abilities, and partly to profile those who are considering teaching. Table 3 shows the distribution of students' abilities across the variables (gender, specialities, etc).

**Table 3: Students' year scores in %**



As the table shows, most students had year scores of either B or C. There are more 'A' female students than male students; this is, apparently, a universal fact. Dr al-Essa, a lecturer at Kuwait University, believes that 'the girls work harder; it's the only way they can get out of the house.'<sup>5</sup> There are some differences here between the two systems: in the American system more students get As and Bs than in the

<sup>5</sup> Cited in a newspaper article by Kristianasen, W., 2003: p.3, with the long headline: *The Islamists, the biggest parliamentary force in Kuwait, are worried. Some of their members were involved in the attacks of 11 September; more have had their fund-raising activities questioned and even shut down. Will they stay in this unwelcome and uncomfortable spotlight?* Mondediplo.



normal system. More significantly, there are twice as many 'A' urban students as 'A' suburban students, while the 'C' suburban students are twice as many as the 'C' urban students. This result may reflect differences between urban and suburban families in their expectations, and ultimately in what Bourdieu (1977) would call their 'cultural capital'.<sup>6</sup>

#### Considering higher education

Eighty-five per cent of school-leavers are planning higher education. Here, the effects of the variables will be analysed.

**Table 4: Considering higher education**

Considering higher education		Yes%	No%	Undecided%
Gender	Male	84	6	10
	Female	84	9	6
Social group**	Suburban	73	12	15
	Urban	96	6	1
School system	American	89	7	4
	Normal	80	9	11
Speciality	Humanities	84	7	9
	Science	85	8	7
Year score**	A	100	0	0
	B	100	0	0
	C	63	19	18
	D	73	12	15
Total		85	8	8

Table 4 shows that:

- For gender, school system and speciality the effects are insignificant, though it should be observed that it is interesting and important that there is no difference between boys and girls in their higher education aspirations.
- The most important of the variable effects shown in Table 4 is, again, the urban/suburban difference. Virtually all the urban students, as against three-quarters (though, of course, 73% is no small proportion) of the suburban, are considering higher education. This difference can be related to the differences in the year scores. Table 4 shows that, unsurprisingly, 'C' and 'D' students are significantly less likely to be considering higher education than 'A' and 'B' students, and it has been seen that suburban students are more likely than urban students to have year scores 'C' and 'D'. What remain uncertain is whether their aspirations are lower because their year scores are lower, or vice-versa, or whether the cause-to-effect operates in both directions.

<sup>6</sup> Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, *reproduction in education: society and culture*, London: sage.



Overall, however, these results demonstrate how strongly Kuwaitis value higher education, and how eager they are to acquire a degree. During the fieldwork, students were asked, informally, if they could give their reasons for planning to enter higher education. A selection of typical replies:

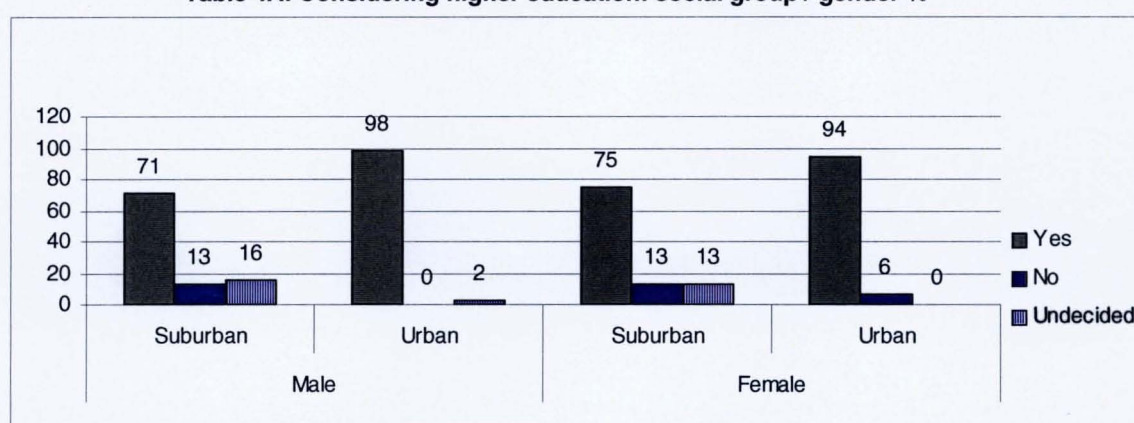
Female student: *'I didn't think about it, it just seems unavoidable'.*

Male student: *'I need a job to start a family; it is hard to find a job without degree'.*

Female student: *'it is a stage of life that I have always dreamed about'.*

It seems that higher education, for both genders, is simply an inevitable, and for many also a desirable, stage of life, leading up to their careers.

**Table 4A: Considering higher education: social group+ gender %**

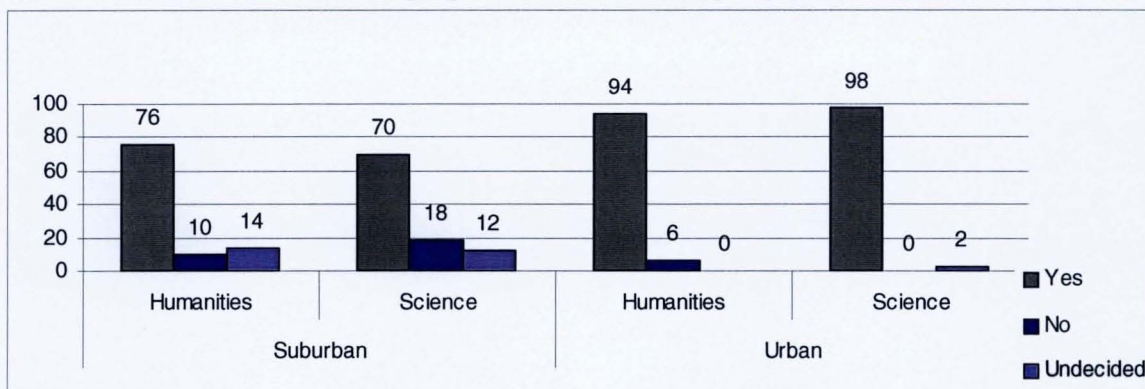


Social group+ gender: \*\*

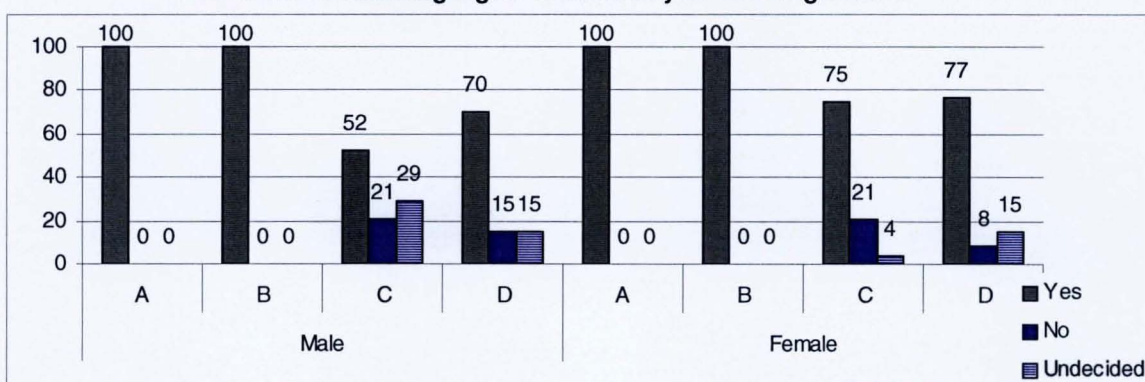
Table 4A presents a cross-tabulation of genders and social groups vis-à-vis considering higher education. Of the four subgroups identified, urban males are the most overwhelmingly likely to be definitely aspiring to higher education at 98%, and suburban males are the least overwhelmingly likely at 71%. The two female subgroups are in the middle, urban females at 94% and suburban females at 75%. The social group difference, then, may be larger for men (27%) than for woman (19%).

Whereas suburban students may be slightly more likely to go into higher education if they are humanities majors, urban students are slightly less likely, but this difference is not statistically significant (Table 4B).

**Table 4B: Considering higher education: Social group+ Speciality %**

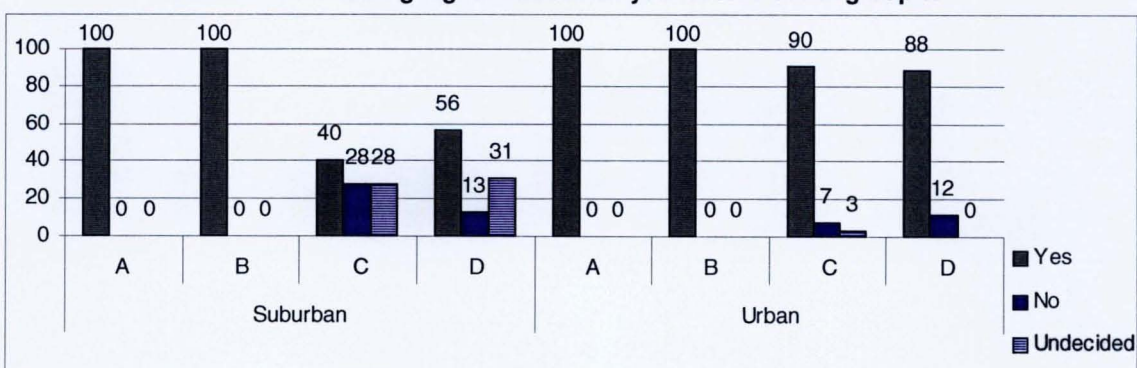


**Table 4C: Considering higher education: year score+ gender %**



'C' and 'D' female students are more likely to be eager to enter higher education than 'C' and 'D' male students. Indeed the proportions of 'C' and 'D' male students who are NOT definitely considering higher education are quite high by Kuwaiti standards, half of the 'C' students and (oddly fewer) 30% of the 'D' students, though many of these are undecided rather than definitely against higher education.

**Table 4D: Considering higher education: year score+ social group %**



Again, there are significant social group differences for 'C' and 'D' students. The vast majority of 'C' and 'D' urban students are planning to enter higher education as against only about half of 'C' and 'D' suburban students.

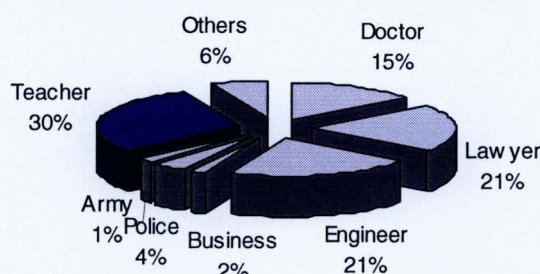


These results demonstrate, among other things, the philosophy and policy of Kuwait University, where selectivity does not play a part; access is both easy and free. There are no obstacles for students when considering higher education. In Kuwait it is almost impossible to sustain a good life style without a degree. All students seem to be aware of this fact. Even those who are not enthusiastic about studying will enter university, almost as if it is compulsory. It remains, however, that between a third and a half of 'C' and 'D' *male* school-leavers, and a similar proportion of C and D *suburban* school-leavers, are not definitely planning on entering higher education.

### The careers considered

In a semi-open question, students were asked to state their career aspirations. Table 5 reflects the most popular answers.

**Table 5: Students' most likely career options %**



As already remarked, the finding that 30% are considering teaching may seem surprising at first. During the fieldwork, students did not seem eager to become teachers. Yet, it is a popular career option, indeed the most popular, as Table 5 shows.

**Table 5A: Students' most likely career options %**

Considering careers%		Doctor	Lawyer	Engineer	Business	Police	Army	Teacher	Others	Total %	Total no.
Gender**	Male	17	15	30	3	8	3	23	1	100	155
	Female	12	26	10	1	-	-	39	12	100	139
Speciality**	Humanities	-	34	-	3	7	2	43	11	100	176
	Science	36	-	52	-	-	-	12	-	100	118
School type	American	17	19	18	4	5	1	26	9	100	145
	Normal	12	21	23	-	3	1	34	4	100	149
Social group	Urban	17	24	24	3	3	3	20	6	100	143
	Suburban	13	17	17	1	5	-	40	7	100	151
Year score**	A	54	15	23	-	-	-	8	-	100	71
	B	5	27	45	5	-	-	8	10	100	100
	C	-	24	-	-	11	3	55	8	100	93
	D	-	-	-	3	7	3	80	7	100	30
Total		15	20	21	2	4	1	30	6	100	294

Table 5A displays the variable effects on career aspirations. The majority of science students want to be either doctors or engineers; only 12% want to become teachers, in comparison with 43% of humanity students (another important finding- and a pattern that Kuwait shares with many other countries at present). One possible explanation is that Kuwaiti students' consideration of their future careers may be heavily based on their year scores rather than the profession which they would personally prefer. There may be no such concept as studying a certain subject just because it is interesting and appealing. So the most able students would gravitate towards science at school and then towards medicine, engineering or maybe law as a career, just because they can, and it would be exceptional for an able student to choose history, drama, music or teaching just because these are seen as suitable for less able students. An alternative explanation is that science specialists have more career options that are attractive than humanities specialists have, and hence they are less likely to choose teaching. Probably both explanations apply.

This section has illustrated Kuwaiti school-leavers' attitudes toward higher education and careers. The data show that a great majority of school-leavers seek higher education, and almost a third have the desire to become teachers. This does not mean, however, that school-leavers hold teaching in high regard. In an informal group discussion during piloting (which I should admit, does not meet the criteria of research) students were asked if they are considering teaching:

'A' male student: *'Of course not'.*

'A' female student: *'No, I want to be a doctor'.*

'D' female student: *'No, it is not my dream'.*

'D' male student: *'Maybe, however I'd rather go into the police forces'.*

These answers do not only represent a pessimistic or negative minority group. They present a picture of the general attitude. Hardly any of the students with whom I engaged informally showed a real passion for teaching. The fact that a third of the students are considering teaching does not mean that teaching is generally seen as an attractive career. So far, it appears to attract certain groups. In the next section, those who are considering teaching will be identified, and the reasons behind their choices will be investigated.

## **2. Those who are considering teaching**

This section now focuses more closely on these 89 school-leavers who are considering a career in teaching. We explore who they are, and the grounds for their



attraction to this profession. Thirteen items in the questionnaire are specifically designed to examine these matters, and the discussion of the findings may be arranged as follows:

- *Who they are;*
- *What they perceive to be the MAIN advantage in being a teacher;*
- *What more generally is influencing their choice to teach.*

#### Who they are

The broad question just analysed about career choices in general is followed up by a more direct and specific question: 'are you considering teaching as a career?'

**Table 6: Are you considering teaching as a career?**

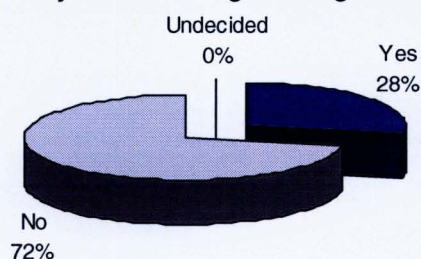


Table 6 shows that 28% of the school-leavers want to become teachers, and 72 % do not, which repeats and confirms the finding from the previous question.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 6A: Those considering teaching as a career %**

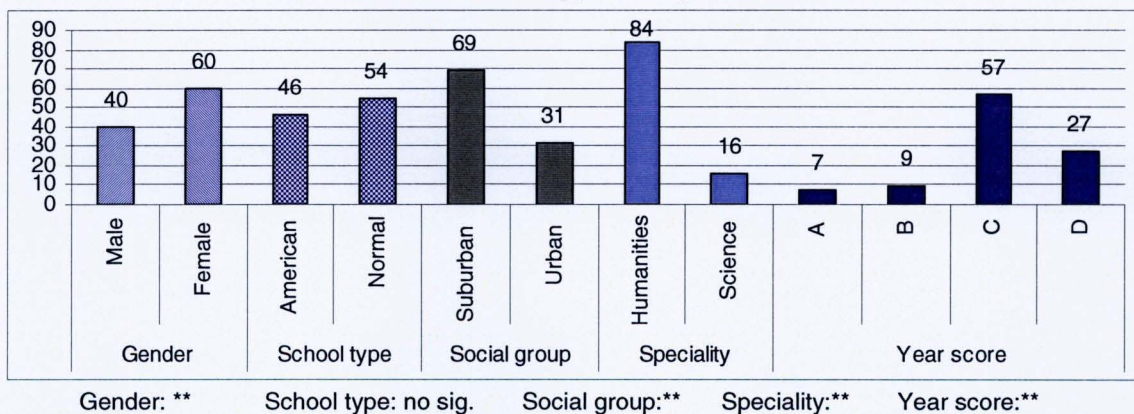


Table 6A shows the five main variable effects. Again, as one would expect, these are consistent with the patterns just presented from the previous question, but they come at these effects from a formally different angle. This breakdown is now not of the whole sample but of the sub-sample. Instead of showing the percentages of the men, women, urbans, suburbans etc in the whole sample of 320 who are considering

<sup>7</sup> For the 'considering career' item, 30% of students chose teaching. This is actually the same number of responses (89 student are considering teaching), but the difference is in the total number of replies to the two questions.

teaching, it shows the percentages of these sub-groups in the sub-sample of 89, for example, the gender ratio in this sub-sample.

All the variable differences, except school type, are statistically significant. However, from the point of view of generalising the findings, I should 'disclaim' the largest of these differences, the 67% difference between humanities and science students, since I admitted in our preliminary discussion of the sample that student speciality is the one area in which the sample may not be properly representative. (However, the previous finding that humanities majors are more than three times as likely as science majors to consider teaching is not affected by this. The government is trying to nationalize the education system, by replacing non-Kuwaiti with Kuwaiti teachers, but it seems it will be difficult to nationalize science teachers.)

Year score is hugely significant in every sense. On this evidence, only 16% of those considering teaching in that year's cohort of school-leavers (and why should it be different from the immediately previous or following cohorts?) are A or B students. Over half are 'C' students and another quarter or more are 'D' students, the least academically able category.<sup>8</sup> The seriousness of this finding is obvious.

More than twice as many suburban as urban students are thinking of teaching, a 7:3 split. There are one and a half times as many females as males, a 6:4 split. But despite the 20% difference between genders, it remains that many males are not reluctant to enter teaching and that Kuwait is not heading towards the feminisation of the profession.

The general pattern might have been predicted, though perhaps not the scale of some of the differences: fewer males, fewer urbans, only very few academically able students, and (almost certainly) fewer science specialists are planning to enter teaching. The importance of these findings lies in the fact that these differences are directly affecting the entrance to teachers' institutions, and consequently the outcome for the profession.

Some variable correlations can be used now to study these recruitment patterns in finer detail.

---

<sup>8</sup> The distribution of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' students in the sample broadly reflects the actual national pattern in schools generally, where 'C' and 'D' students are in the lower half of academic ability.



Table 6B: Gender+ social group

Those considering becoming a teacher. N. (%)	Male		Female	
	<i>Suburb</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Suburb</i>	<i>Urban</i>
	20 (55%)	16(45%)	42(78%)	12(22%)

The findings shown in Table 6B have important implications. First, it should be noticed that almost half the total (42 of the 89) are suburban females. Next, the difference between urban and suburban females is much greater than the difference between urban and suburban males. So, first, it is obvious that 'the suburban factor' operates almost exclusively on females. The social group difference among males (55 to 45) is relatively small, whereas the social group difference among females is massive. Secondly, it seems that the gender factor in recruitment (the greater number of females) operates only among suburbans. Indeed, it seems it may actually be reversed among urbans, since the proportion of urban males in the sample considering teaching is substantially higher than the proportion of urban females.

This might be due to suburban traditions, which are likely to dictate that suburban females do not consider other careers. There are substantial consequences for the culture of teacher institutions and the supply of teachers. It may seem politically incorrect to address this issue, yet it cannot be ignored. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, suburbans tend to be embedded in dated traditions, which make teaching, with its gender-division structure, a very attractive profession for them. Their prominence could, however, drive some urban 'liberal' students, or more precisely urban females, away from the profession and its conservative and old-fashioned culture.

Table 6C: Gender+ year score %

Those considering becoming a teacher	Male %		Female %	
	<i>'A' and 'B' students</i>	<i>'C' and 'D' students</i>	<i>'A' and 'B' students</i>	<i>'C' and 'D' students</i>
	0	100	18	82

Table 6D: Social group+ year score %

Those considering becoming a teacher	Suburban %		Urban %	
	<i>'A' and 'B' students</i>	<i>'C' and 'D' students</i>	<i>'A' and 'B' students</i>	<i>'C' and 'D' students</i>
	22	78	1	99

It was been discovered that teaching, although a very popular career option, is not an attractive career for academically able students. What Tables 6C and 6D, add to this, is that, with just one exception, all the academically able (A and B) students who are considering teaching are suburban females. So it should be acknowledged that

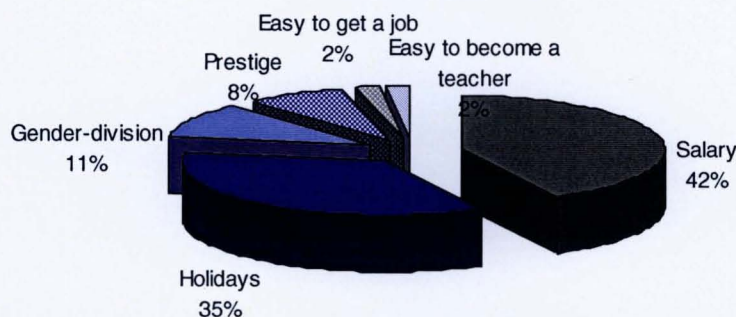
whatever issues suburban females may bring to the profession, they also bring the most academically able recruits.

Overall, these findings reveal that there is no difficulty in attracting Kuwaitis to the teaching profession; the difficulty is in attracting certain groups.

What they perceive to be the MAIN advantage in being a teacher

Respondents who are considering teaching were presented with a series of putative advantages of the teaching profession (nine choices); they were asked to identify the single greatest of these advantages.

**Table 7: What attracts students the most to teaching? %**



As previously observed, the large majority of these students choose either for salary (42%) or holidays (35%). That teaching is a gender-divided profession is the most appealing factor for a further 11%, and 8% view 'prestige' as the main attraction to the profession. These results suggest that a broadly materialistic and pragmatic logic is applied when these school-leavers rationalize their choice of teaching. They show what they recognize as important and also what teaching in Kuwait is seen to offer.

The following informal students' comments illustrate some of their perceptions:

Female student: *'I'd like to be a teacher, good salary and lots of holidays'.*

Female student: *'It is a good job for married woman'.*

Female students: *'A respectable job for a woman'.*

Male student: *'Not bad salary, and lots of holidays'.*

Male student: *'As good as I can get with my grades'.*



Table 7A: What attracts students the most to teaching? %

Variables	Main attraction of teaching %	Salary	Work load	Holidays	Career progression	Gender-division	Prestige	Challenging	Easy to get a	Easy to become a teacher	Total
Gender **	<i>Male</i>	65	-	29	-	3	3	-	-	-	100
	<i>Female</i>	26	-	41	-	17	11	-	4	2	100
School type**	<i>American</i>	49	-	27	-	12	10	-	2	-	100
	<i>Normal</i>	35	-	44	-	10	6	-	2	2	100
Social group	<i>Suburb</i>	41	-	33	-	16	10	-	-	-	100
	<i>Urban</i>	43	-	43	-	-	4	-	7	4	100
Speciality **	<i>Humanities</i>	35	-	40	-	12	9	-	3	1	100
	<i>Science</i>	80	-	13	-	7	-	-	-	-	100
Year score*	<i>A</i>	17	-	17	-	66	-	-	-	-	100
	<i>B</i>	25	-	62	-	13	-	-	-	-	100
	<i>C</i>	49	-	37	-	10	4	-	-	-	100
	<i>D</i>	38	-	29	-	-	18	-	7	4	100
Total		42	-	36	-	11	8	-	2	2	100

Table 7A shows that two thirds of the males choosing teaching did so mainly for the salary, while 'holidays' is the most popular (at 41%) of the main attractions for females. Again, where salary is the most popular main attraction for those from the American system, holidays is the most popular for those from the normal system.

Sixteen percent of suburban students are considering teaching mainly because it is a gender-divided profession. This percentage may seem smaller than might have been expected considering most of these suburban students are female. However, it compares with 0% of the urban students! It should be noted, too, that 66%, two out of three, of the small number of 'A' students considering teaching (almost all are suburban female students) chose it mainly for that reason. In same tension with that finding, 62% of 'B' students, who are also almost exclusively suburban females, give the holidays as their reasons. Finally, not many in any subgroup chose teaching mainly for its prestige, but it is interesting to note that of those who did, nearly all are 'D' students.

None of the students chose as the main attraction of teaching its workload, or that it is challenging, or its career progression. Perhaps students aged 17 or 18 are not aware of, or concern about, these elements in choosing a profession, or perhaps these elements do not strike the students as obvious characteristics of teaching as a profession.



**Table 7B. What attracts students the most to teaching? gender + social group %**

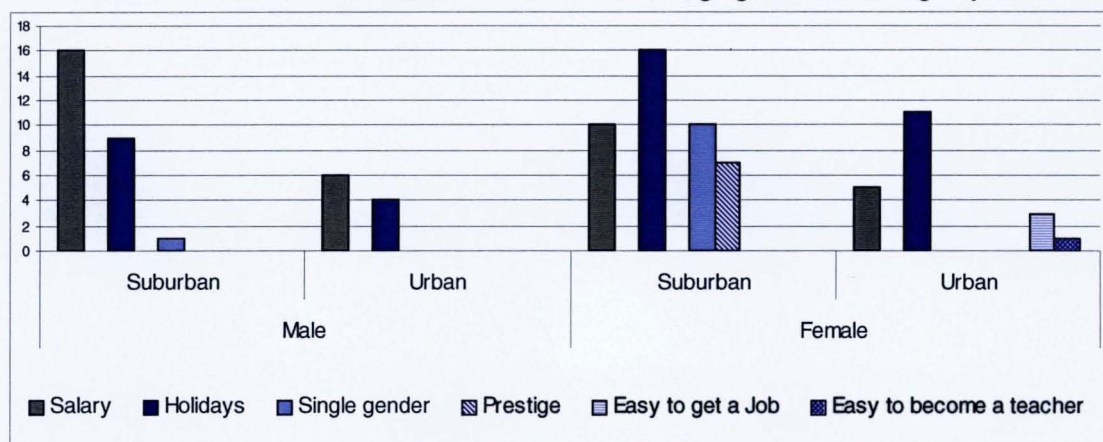


Table 7B shows, first, how males as a whole have a simpler and more materialistic motivation than females. It confirms that males in both social groups choose teaching mainly for the salary, whereas females in both social groups choose it mainly for its holidays, reflecting a traditional male-dominant society, where men are still seen as providers and women as homemakers. However, that gender separation operates more strongly in suburban society is reflected in the fact that it is equal to salary as a main attraction for suburban females. The table also confirms that those who chose teaching mainly for its gender segregation are all females, mostly from the suburbs. School-leavers who perceive the easy access to teaching as the main attraction are mostly urban females.

The whole sample of 320 students were asked an open-ended question concerning why they did, or did not, want to enter the teaching profession. Most answers centered on only one main reason, though the questionnaire gave them enough space to address more than one point. They seem to prefer to expand and elaborate one point rather than giving different ones. Because there is not much diversity in the responses, it proved easy to place them in a small number of categories. The 89 students who are considering teaching gave the following positive comments:

- *Good salary (57%)*
- *I love teaching (17%)*
- *Perfect profession for women (17%)*
- *Holidays (7%)*
- *Teachers' contribution to society is priceless (3%)*

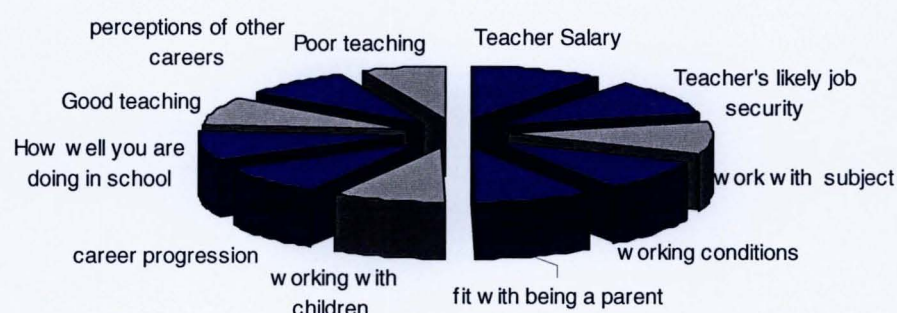
The most common reason for considering teaching is again the salary, but the percentages for other reasons differ somewhat from those for the close-ended questions. Holidays are mentioned much less, while love of teaching and being a

suitable profession for women are more popular reasons. This hints at the value of the next section.

### Influences on the choice to teach

As explained earlier, having identified their main attraction to teaching, it is sensible to invite them also to a more complex and nuanced assessment of their motivations, by presenting them with eleven items designed to examine the importance of different elements influencing their decision to consider teaching, each to be scored on a scale of 1 to 5. Table 8 presents the students' responses to these items in a different format from Table 2A. The grey segments signify the intrinsic factors and the blue signify the extrinsic ones, and table 8A shows the mean rate of influences for each factor, both overall and for each variable set.

**Table 8: Influences on attitudes toward teaching as a career**



The findings show that all the factors are important for some significant number of the respondents. Interestingly, the intrinsic factors are virtually as important as the extrinsic ones. The final column of Table 8A shows that salaries and 'job security' (which is close to 'salary') share the highest rating: 4.5, but 'continuing to work with a subject' (4) and 'working with children' (3.8) also score well. The lowest rating for influence is 'poor teaching they have experienced as pupils' at 2.8, which is significantly below the mean of all factors: 3.8.



Table 8A: Influences on attitudes toward teaching as a career %

Influences in favour of becoming a teacher	Gender		Social group		School system		Speciality		Year score				MEAN
	Male	Female	Suburb	Urban	American	Normal	Humanities	Science	A	B	C	D	
Teacher's Salaries	4.7	4.3	4.1	4.9	4.4	4.6	4.9	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.8	4.9	4.5
Job security	3.8	5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.8	4.2	4	4.4	4.5	4.9	4.5
Teachers' working conditions	4	4	4	4	4.1	3.9	3.7	4.3	4.5	3.9	4	3.9	4
School terms fit with being a parent	3.1	4.9	4.5	3.5	4.2	3.8	4.3	3.7	5	3.5	4	3.9	4
Continuing to work with your subject	3	5	3.1	4.9	4.5	3.5	4	4	3.8	4.1	4.3	4	4
Interest in working with children	2.6	5	3.9	3.7	3.6	4	3.9	3.7	4	3	3.5	4.1	3.8
Teacher's likely career progression	3	4.6	4.7	3.1	3.8	3.8	4.1	3.5	4.1	3.8	3.5	3.9	3.8
How well you are doing in school	4	3.4	3.1	4.3	3.8	3.6	3	4.4	2.8	2.7	4.1	4.2	3.7
Good teaching you experienced as a pupil	2.4	4.9	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.8	4.5	2.9	3.3	4	3.5	3.8	3.7
Your perceptions of other careers	4	3	3.7	3.3	3.2	3.8	3.1	3.9	4.6	3.5	3.7	3.1	3.5
Poor teaching you experienced as a pupil	2.3	3.3	2.8	2.8	2.6	3	2.7	2.9	2.2	2.6	3	3	2.8
Average scores	3.3	4.3	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.9	4	3.8

In considering the variable effects on influence ratings, it is important to look first in the 'bottom' row of Table 8A for different average degrees of 'generosity' in awarding points. The one statistical significant difference there is that females average one whole point more than males (4.3 compared to 3.3) for generosity. However, even when only the male-female differences that are noticeably more than this one point are counted, it is found that gender is the variable with the largest effect, impacting on 6 of the 11 influence ratings. The overall meaning of these effects considered collectively is that females are substantially more open than males to influences other than 'salaries' and 'working conditions', more open, first, to family considerations, but, second, more open also to considerations intrinsic to teaching, like working with children or working with their subject. In sum, Kuwaiti female school-leavers considering teaching have much stronger 'human interest' motives than their male counterparts.

There are also social group differences for some factors. Urbans give more importance to 'working with their subject' than suburbans. Also, salaries and 'how well they are doing in school' are more important influences for urbans, whereas suburbans attribute higher importance to 'school terms fit with being a parent'.

The only full point difference between the two school systems is that the American system acknowledge 'continuing working with their subject' as the biggest influence. Science students are more influenced by 'how well they are doing in school' than humanities students, which is difficult to interpret but it may suggest that science specialist will be inclined to consider teaching if their academic scores are too low for other science- based careers. Humanities students are, by far, more influenced by good teaching they have experienced, which might be thought to suggest that humanities teachers have more room for their personality to shine than science teachers. There is a decline in the importance of salaries with a decline in year score. For 'A' students (found to be suburban females), there is exceptional importance in how teaching fits family life. Finally, 'how well they are doing in school' is significantly more of an influence for less able students than more able ones, which again suggests that teaching is seen as academically undemanding.

Generally, the impression gathered from the findings specific to the sample of 89 school-leavers considering teaching is that many factors are entering into their consideration. Extrinsic motives dominate their choices of the MAIN factor in their consideration, with a sense of clear and undoubted objectives and a well-defined approach to their goals. Salary, security, and holidays (especially for women) seem to be the most important concerns. However, when given the opportunity to respond to each of a series of possible motivations, a more balanced picture emerges in which intrinsic, altruistic and 'compassionate' influences are also clearly at work (particularly among the female students).

### **3. Status of teachers**

Returning to the whole sample of the school-leavers, nine items were designed to examine their perceptions of the status of teachers in Kuwait. These items will be grouped and discussed as follows:

#### *Ideal Profession*

- *What is the most honourable profession (choices given)*
- *What is the most prestigious profession (choices given)*

#### *The Relative Status of Teaching*

- *The status of teachers in comparison to other professions (On a scale of 1 to 10)*
- *Teachers' prestige is equal to other graduate professions (agree/disagree)*



- The status of teachers is low in comparison to other university-graduate occupations (agree/disagree)

#### What is Wrong with Teaching

- Disadvantages of teaching (choices given)
- Teachers require special skills and expertise (agree/disagree)
- Teaching not interesting but pays well (agree/disagree)
- Teachers are appreciated in Kuwait (yes/no)

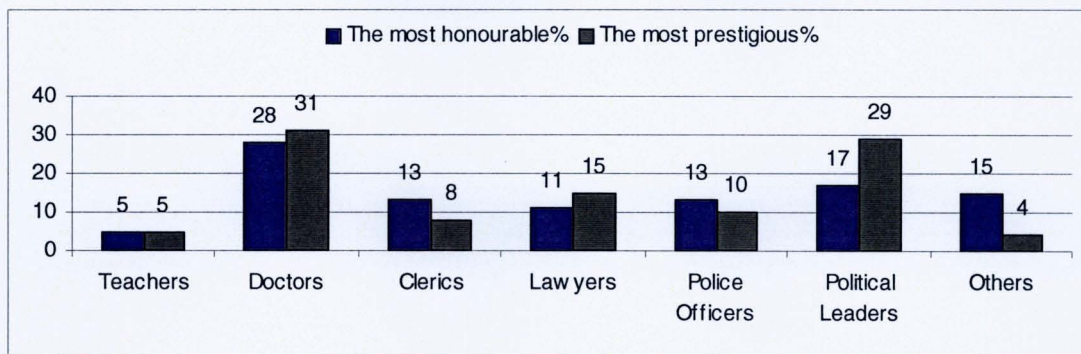
#### Status as a Factor in Recruitment

- Higher status can attract teachers (agree/disagree)

#### Ideal profession

In two separate questions that will be considered together here, students were invited to indicate out of a given range of choices, including some not mentioned in other questions, the most honourable profession and the most prestigious profession. Table 9 demonstrates the overall findings for both questions.

**Table 9: The most honourable profession and the most prestigious profession %**



The respondents' perceptions of honour are in general strongly associated with their perceptions of prestige. Other than for 'political leaders', the professions scored very similarly for both, suggesting, perhaps, that the latter is seen as a large element of the former. However, the fact that political leaders are saluted significantly more for prestige than honour shows that many school-leavers acknowledge this distinction. Furthermore, comparing Tables 9A and 9B shows that all the subgroups give political leaders more votes for prestige than for honour.

Doctors, by far, receive the most positive responses in regards to both honour and prestige. This profession has a base of scientific knowledge that may well impress



the school-leavers. It could be, also, the altruistic nature of this profession that makes an impact on them. Clerics and police officers, which in Kuwait are both professions that serve the law, are perceived as having equal honour and prestige!

Teaching appears to get the fewest votes both for the most honourable and for the most prestigious profession.

**Table 9A: The most honourable profession %**

The most honourable profession %	Gender		Social group		School system		Speciality		Year score				Total
	Male	Female	Suburb	Urban	American	Normal	Humanities	Science	A	B	C	D	
Teachers	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5
Doctors	30	26	27	29	28	29	25	30	31	28	28	25	28
Clerics	17	9	13	13	10	15	15	11	3	8	20	22	13
Lawyers	5	18	18	4	11	10	12	10	10	9	12	13	11
Police Officers	16	9	13	13	12	14	13	12	7	6	19	19	13
Political Leaders	20	15	18	16	17	16	19	15	15	17	19	17	17
Others	7	18	15	20	17	11	11	17	30	22	0	0	15
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table 9B: The most prestigious profession %**

The most prestigious profession %	Gender		Social group		School system		Speciality		Year score				Total
	Male	Female	Suburb	Urban	American	Normal	Humanities	Science	A	B	C	D	
Teachers	5	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5
Doctors	32	30	31	32	31	30	32	30	41	40	21	21	31
Clerics	10	6	8	8	7	9	10	6	1	11	13	20	8
Lawyers	9	20	22	8	15	14	16	13	14	13	15	15	15
Police Officers	10	9	11	9	9	11	10	9	4	3	17	15	10
Political Leaders	30	28	32	26	29	28	28	29	26	28	33	27	29
Others	55	3	0	12	4	3	0	7	12	15	0	0	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The largest variation is in year scores. It is interesting, for example, that relatively large numbers of 'D' students, but almost no 'A' students, saw clerics as either the most honourable or the most prestigious group. When it came to teaching, however, 'A' and 'D' students are equally reluctant to see it as either the most honourable or the most prestigious.



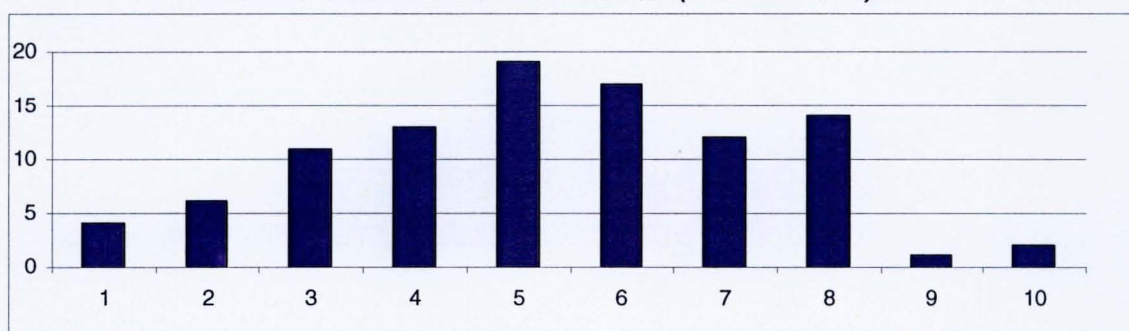
Indeed, the two tables show that teaching as a profession receive the fewest 'votes' for either the most honourable or the most prestigious profession *from just about all subgroups*. This is in contrast to other careers, where variations in responses appear – particularly in relation to year scores and genders. So, respondents with different academic abilities have different perceptions in regard to what is a prestigious profession (and 'D' school-leavers appear to have roughly equal and moderately positive perceptions in regard to all professions except teachers). For example, the genders vary in their perceptions of lawyers inasmuch as women are notably more likely than men to see them as most honourable and, again, as most prestigious.

It remains that 28% of the school-leavers want to become teachers. And salary and holidays (which connected up with family considerations) are prominent in their complex motivations. Do the findings indicate that for these school-leavers considering teaching these other 'extrinsic' factors are outweighing the perceived relatively low status of teaching?

#### The Relative Status of Teaching

Moving to a more direct focus on teacher status, first, students were asked to indicate the standing of teachers in comparison to other professions on a scale of 1 to 10. Table 10 displays that wide range of responses to this question. The differences in opinion are dramatic: from the lowest possible to the highest possible.<sup>9</sup> However, most responses are spread between 3 and 8 on the scale with a mean of 5.2.

**Table 10: What is the status of teachers? (on a scale of 10) %**

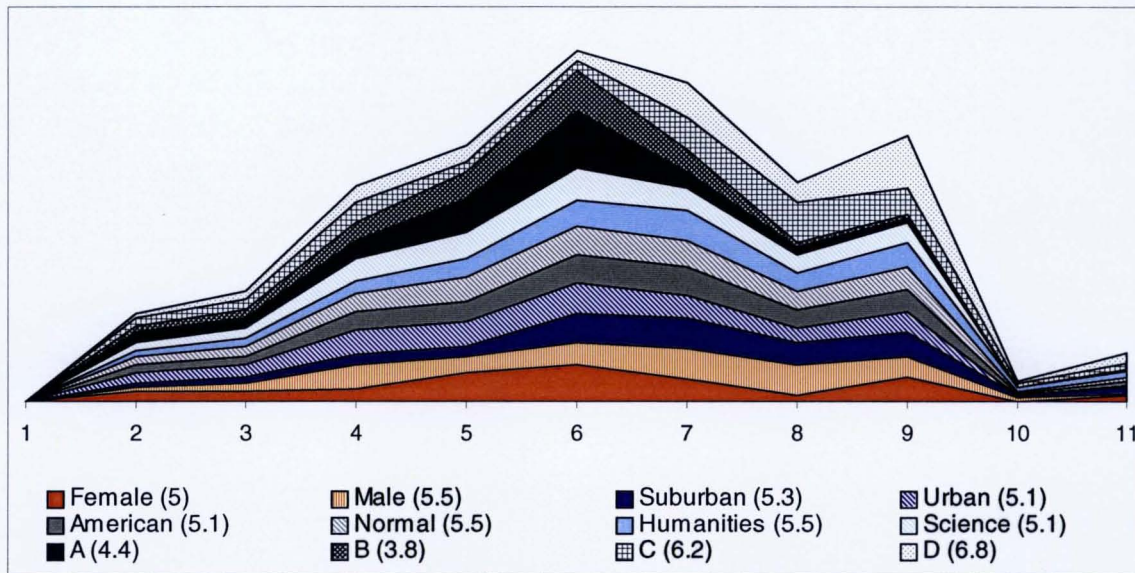


This finding can be translated by saying that most regard teacher status as moderate (between moderately low and moderately high).

<sup>9</sup> It should be observed that students often experienced some difficulty in responding to this question, as shown by their requests to me for clarification.



Table 10A: What is the status of teachers? (% on a scale of 10)  
By variables



Each layer represents a particular sub-group and the VARIATIONS IN THE WIDTH of each layer represent the distribution of that sub-groups' 'marks'. The table is designed to facilitate the comparison of those variations across sub-groups.

Table 10A reveals some differences by variables in both the mean responses and the spread of the responses. Male responses are more widely dispersed than female responses, which are gathered more towards the middle of the scale. Suburbans are more positive than urbans, and humanities majors than science majors. The largest contrast, however, is between the positive scoring of the 'C' and 'D' school-leavers (widest at points 8 and 9 respectively) and the much more reluctant scoring of the 'A' and 'B' school-leavers.

Some students may have answered according to what they thought they should believe; some may have been influenced by the large numbers of non-national teachers; and others may have been bearing in mind the good salaries. One is tempted to say, indeed, that students have two main images of teachers: a Kuwaiti teacher whose ability to teach is not admired but who is paid well, and a knowledgeable non-national who does not earn enough and has no power. In any case, it could be argued from the range of these responses either that school-leavers are uncertain about the status of teachers or, alternatively, from the mean score for all groups of 5.2 that they see this status as average.

The status of teachers is not low for most school-leavers, but did it stand in the same rank as other graduate professions? In two further questions, respondents were invited to indicate their views on *teachers' prestige in comparison to other professions* (Table 11) and their level of agreement with the statement that *teacher*



*status is low in comparison to other graduate professions* (Table 12). The tables reveal that the students appreciate both the distinction and the relationship between prestige and status.

**Table 11: Teachers' prestige is equal to that of other university graduate occupations %**

Variables <sup>10</sup>	Teachers' prestige is equal to other university graduate occupations	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub Total	Hesitant	Sub Total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	<i>Male</i>	8	18	26	23	52	41	11	2.7
	<i>Female</i>	8	20	28	22	48	39	9	2.7
Social group	<i>Suburban</i>	8	19	27	21	50	40	10	2.6
	<i>Urban</i>	8	19	27	24	48	38	10	2.7
School system	<i>American</i>	9	18	27	24	48	41	7	2.7
	<i>Normal</i>	7	20	27	23	50	38	12	2.6
Year score **	<i>A</i>	5	6	11	9	80	61	19	2.1
	<i>B</i>	5	8	13	12	75	50	25	2.2
	<i>C</i>	11	23	34	37	29	29	0	3.1
	<i>D</i>	10	40	50	33	17	17	0	3.4
Total %		8	19	27	23	49	39	10	2.7

As the bottom row in Table 11 shows, half the respondents do not agree that teachers have equal *prestige* with other graduate occupations. Just over quarter agree, and nearly a quarter are hesitant. Perhaps the most interesting figure is the last one. One quarter is a large group of school-leavers to be unsure about the prestige of teachers in society; or perhaps they are uncomfortable about admitting that Kuwait society does not value teachers as much they should. Also, it appears from the table that only 18% have strong views on this matter. The others stayed clear of the more extreme views. In any case, Table 11 suggests a view of teacher prestige that is more negative than positive.

The variable effects are similar to those for the previous question, except that here there is no social group effect – the responses from each social group are almost identical. The academically able have the most negative and the least hesitant views, while the less able students have the most positive and the most hesitant views. (Groups who have negative perceptions seem more certain and firm in their views than other groups.)

<sup>10</sup> The speciality variable is not displayed in this table because the data on humanities/science got mislead, and I was not able to retreat them since much of this data has been done manually.



When students were asked to score the status of teachers; the mean was 5.2 out of 10, which seems moderate rather than low. However, when faced with the more direct and straightforward proposition that it is low compared to other graduate occupations, it becomes clearer the students perceive it indeed more as low than as moderate.

**Table 12: Teacher status is low in comparison to other university graduate occupations %**

Variables	Teacher status is low in comparison to other university graduate occupations	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	<i>Male</i>	14	48	62	13	19	14	5	3.3
	<i>Female</i>	17	44	61	11	28	20	8	3.4
Social group	<i>Suburb</i>	12	49	61	10	30	24	6	3.4
	<i>Urban</i>	20	44	64	14	23	16	7	3.6
School system	<i>American</i>	16	45	61	13	24	19	5	3.4
	<i>Normal</i>	16	47	63	12	27	21	6	3.5
Speciality	<i>Humanities</i>	10	38	48	13	36	25	11	3
	<i>Science</i>	22	53	75	10	15	15	0	3.8
Year score	<i>A</i>	27	61	88	4	7	4	3	4
	<i>B</i>	20	56	76	4	20	16	4	3.7
	<i>C</i>	12	40	52	19	26	20	6	3.2
	<i>D</i>	4	24	28	22	50	40	10	2.7
Total %		16	46	62	12	26	20	6	3.5

So, it appears from Table 12 that almost two-thirds see teacher status as low in that comparative context, and only a quarter disagree. (However, it is interesting to note, comparing Tables 12 and 11, that the comparative status of teachers is seen as lower than their comparative prestige.)

The significant variable effects are consistent with those noted for the previous two questions. Science majors tend much more to agree with the statement of low status (75%) than humanities majors (48%), and the academically able much more than the less able. Indeed, there is a steady decline from 'A' students to 'D' students' in the percentages agreeing with the statement.

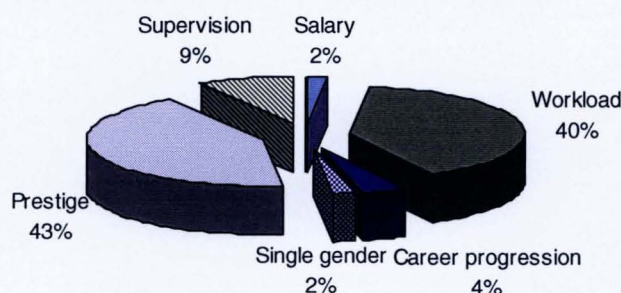
There is a quite serious implication in that final point when it has been observed that there are informal distinctions of status among students themselves. So it can be declared that higher status students are more negative about teacher status than lower status students, or that it is mainly relatively low-status students who are likely



to think teacher status is high. In itself, this is evidence that teachers have relatively low status.

### What is Wrong with Teaching

**Table 13: What is the main disadvantage of teaching?**



More than two out of five of the school-leavers select its status or prestige as the main disadvantage of teaching. This suggests that these students perceive the teaching profession as having low prestige. Others, too, might believe this without thinking is the main disadvantage of teaching. However, in one of the informal discussions with students, one argue that:

*'Teachers have good status, but I am looking for better status, a better future'.*

That may accurately express the view of many school-leavers, namely, that the status of teachers is acceptable 'in the abstract', yet in comparison with other professions it does not win through.

The second most often selected disadvantage is the workload of the teaching profession. It is interesting here to recall that teachers in Kuwait work an average 12 hours a week, but students may lack awareness of this fact. As one teacher comments, concerning this result:

*'Students see us running around, marking papers, giving exams, therefore they make up their own conceptions. Also we are the only profession they are in touch with on a daily basis.'*

Only 8 students (2%) out of 320 saw salary as the main disadvantage; there is indeed general satisfaction with teachers' salaries.



Table 13A: What is the MAIN disadvantage of teaching? %

Variables	Reasons for not considering teaching	Salary	Work load	Holidays	Career progression	Single gender	Prestige	Challenging	Supervision	Total %
Gender	Male	4	45	-	3		39	-	3	100
	Female	1	34	-	4	3	32	-	15	100
School system	American	3	34	-	2	3	52	-	6	100
	Normal	2	45	-	6	-	35	-	13	100
Social group	Suburban	3	54	-	3	-	27	-	13	100
	Urban	3	25	-	4	3	60	-	5	100
Speciality	Humanities	4	53	-	6	3	20	-	15	100
	Science	0	17	-	-	-	83	-	-	100
Year score	A	7	14	-	9	1	51	-	17	100
	B	1	38	-	5	-	42	-	15	100
	C	3	33	-	-	6	57	-	-	100
	D	1	60	-	-	2	37	-	1	100
Total %		2	40	-	4	2	43	-	9	100

Table 13A shows important variable effects relating both to prestige and to workload. In relation to **(lack of) prestige**, science majors (83%!) and urban students (60%) are *hugely* more likely than humanities majors and suburban students to select it as the main disadvantage. Also, school-leavers from the American system are *notably* more likely than those from the normal system to select it. In relation to **workload** as a disadvantage, the relative positions are more or less reversed. Suburbans and humanities majors are now *hugely* more put off than urbans and science majors, and those from the normal system are *somewhat* more concerned than those from the American system. And the least academically able students are *hugely* more concerned about workload than the most able and that males are *somewhat* more concerned than females.

**(Working under) supervision** comes third as the main disadvantage, though a long way behind prestige and workload. This disadvantage is selected by substantially more females, suburbans, humanities majors, those from the normal school system and the academically able, than by their opposites.

In the open-ended question referred to earlier, the 'explanations' offered by the school-leavers who are not considering teaching fall into the following small number of categories:

- *I am interested in another profession (20%)*
- *Better jobs available (29%)*
- *Teachers have a low status in society (37%)*
- *Teachers' workload (9%)*



- *Teachers are badly paid (3%)*
- *Teaching is for failures (2%)*

These open or 'self-starting' responses give extra clarity to what school-leavers think of the teaching profession. The language used sometimes illustrates not just what they think but how they feel about the profession. Workload is much less mentioned than might have been expected from the closed responses, but status is mentioned a lot. It should also be noticed that the total of 51% of explanations for not considering teaching in the final four categories involved a more or less explicit critique of teaching. Indeed even the second category, '*better jobs available*', could be seen as an implicit critique, so that only the 20% in the first category spontaneously explain their decision in a way that is 'courteous' to teaching.

It is hypothesised in this study that Kuwaitis presume that anybody can teach, and that this may be a major reason for not appreciating the work of teachers. The school-leavers were questioned in regard to this matter.

**Table 14: Do teachers require special skills and expertise? %**

Variables	Teachers require special skills and expertise	Yes	Don't know	Not much	No	Total %
Gender	<i>Male</i>	62	2	22	14	100
	<i>Female</i>	50	6	26	18	100
Social group	<i>Suburb</i>	56	4	30	10	100
	<i>Urban</i>	56	4	18	22	100
School system	<i>American</i>	54	6	20	20	100
	<i>Normal</i>	58	2	28	12	100
Speciality	<i>Humanities</i>	40	4	26	30	100
	<i>Science</i>	72	4	22	2	100
Year score	<i>A</i>	26	4	40	30	100
	<i>B</i>	50	4	20	26	100
	<i>C</i>	68	4	20	8	100
	<i>D</i>	76	4	16	4	100
Total %		56	4	24	17	100

Disappointingly, 41% of the school-leavers think that teachers' work requires little or no special skills. They view teaching as more or less unsophisticated work that anybody can do! 56% believe it does require special skills and expertise, but this majority is unimpressive in this context. If the same question were asked in regard to other university professions, it would be likely that the majorities would have been overwhelming.

It is particularly worrying that the most academically able respondents are the most dismissive of teachers' required skill. Approximately, 70% of less academically able students acknowledge these special skills, perhaps because the harder the students perceive the curriculum, the more they acknowledge teachers' skilled work. Probably



for a different reason, science majors acknowledged teachers' skills much more than humanities majors. This could be due to the difficulties of the disciplines they are studying, and which require esoteric knowledge that is not easily accessible to all.

There are no significant differences in replies across genders and social groups.

In informal discussions with the students, too, there is little indication that school students view teaching as challenging. One female student observes that:

*'Teaching could be fun.'*

But remarks like the following are far more typical in their disregard for the challenge aspect of the profession

Female student: *'How hard could it be?'*

Male student: *'I guess teaching could be boring in the long run.'*

Female student: *'I could not do the same thing for the rest of my life.'*

Male student: *'Compared to other professions, being a teacher is too basic.'*

Here, as when none of the students responding to a previous question perceive the challenging aspect of the profession as its main attraction, *the interest* of teaching seems to be invisible to most students. On the other hand, most students readily perceive its salaries as satisfactory, if not its main attraction. The question in Table 15 was designed to investigate, directly, how Kuwaiti students would respond to the depressing summation that *teaching is not challenging or interesting, but pays well*.

Table 15: Teaching is uninteresting but pays well? %

Variables	Teaching not interesting/pays well	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	<i>Male</i>	14	43	57	16	26	18	8	3.3
	<i>Female</i>	14	39	53	21	26	17	9	3.3
Social group	<i>Suburb</i>	16	45	61	11	28	19	9	3.4
	<i>Urban</i>	13	37	50	26	25	17	8	3.3
School system	<i>American</i>	15	39	54	20	26	19	7	3.4
	<i>Normal</i>	14	42	56	18	27	18	9	3.4
Speciality	<i>Humanities</i>	19	53	72	19	9	9	0	3.8
	<i>Science</i>	10	30	40	19	35	27	8	2.9
Year score	<i>A</i>	8	20	28	12	60	54	6	2.7
	<i>B</i>	8	34	42	40	18	9	9	3.2
	<i>C</i>	20	54	74	16	10	5	5	3.8
	<i>D</i>	20	56	76	8	16	4	12	3.7
Totals%		14	41	55	19	26	18	8	3.4

Although responses may be complicated by the statement, as it includes one positive and one negative component, the 55% of respondents who agree with the statement did unambiguously commit themselves to both its halves. The hesitant group of 19% are, perhaps, those who agree with one part of the statement but not the other, but logically some of these may also be among the total of 26% who disagree. It seems probable, though not certain, that most of that 26% are disassociating themselves from the idea that teaching is uninteresting, but it remains depressing that a definite majority do see it as an uninteresting occupation (though paying well).

One wonders how many of the sub-sample of 28% who are considering teaching are part of this majority! <sup>11</sup> It is relevant to take account of the two clear variable effects: for specialities and for year scores. The majority is reduced to a sizeable minority when it comes to the science majors and, also, when it comes to the academically able 'A' and 'B' students. Conversely, it includes really large majorities of the humanities majors (72%) and the 'C' and 'D' students (74-76%) – unfortunately, groups which are quite disproportionately represented in the sub-sample who are considering teaching as a career.

It is now clear that school-leavers do not generally perceive teaching as one of the most honourable and prestigious professions, and that it has low status in comparison to other graduate occupations in their eyes. But do they consider this to be the natural state of affairs, or might they agree that teaching deserves better? The way chosen to investigate this is to ask them whether they thought *Kuwait appreciated fairly the work of teachers*

Care is needed in interpreting the responses to this question. Those who respond positively should include most of the minority who have a definitely positive view of existing teacher status, but may also include some whose position is that teachers deserve no better than the low status they have. The negative responses may be less ambiguous and they logically imply that teachers deserve a higher status. However, there are also two contextual factors to bear in mind in interpreting these responses. The first is related to Islam. Kuwaitis are taught from a young age that teachers ought to be appreciated and admired, if not worshipped. Islam emphasises the 'prophet like' role of teachers. Such a belief might push up the number of

---

<sup>11</sup> In principle, this could have been checked, but, unfortunately, such correlations proved beyond the power of *this* survey, because the data was entered and collated in a more basic 'manual' manner than in later surveys.



responses sincerely advocating more respect; on the other hand, some respondents might find it hard to acknowledge their actual belief in regard to this matter. The second point related to the fact that many teachers are non-nationals to whom the government pays only half the salaries of Kuwaitis, and awareness for their particular position may be affecting the student responses.

**Table 16: Are teachers appreciated in Kuwait? %**

Variables	Teachers are appreciated in Kuwait	Yes	Don't know	Not much	No	Total %
<b>Gender**</b>	<i>Male</i>	18	6	38	38	100
	<i>Female</i>	30	8	20	42	100
<b>Social group**</b>	<i>Suburb</i>	34	4	30	32	100
	<i>Urban</i>	14	10	28	48	100
<b>School system</b>	<i>American</i>	24	7	34	35	100
	<i>Normal</i>	24	7	24	45	100
<b>Speciality**</b>	<i>Humanities</i>	42	6	18	34	100
	<i>Science</i>	6	8	40	46	100
<b>Year score</b>	<i>A</i>	4	12	36	48	100
	<i>B</i>	12	4	20	64	100
	<i>C</i>	40	8	28	24	100
	<i>D</i>	40	4	32	24	100
<b>Total %</b>		24	7	29	40	100

Twenty-four per cent of the students think that teachers are appreciated in Kuwait. Tables 11 and 12 above revealed that similar proportions agree that teachers' prestige is equal to that of other graduates (27%) and disagree that teachers' status is low in comparison to other graduates (26%). It seems that there is a consistent core of 'optimists' about teacher status, approximately a quarter of the sample. And these data possibly indicate that the proportion of school-leaver 'cynics' who think teachers deserve a low status is very small.

The clearest and most striking finding is the very large proportion of school-leavers who think teachers are under-appreciated. A total of almost 70% think either that they are not appreciated (40%), or that they are not much appreciated (29%). I could call them 'the idealists' and I should note that they will have included both those school-leavers who thought primarily of their own teachers as deserving more public status and those who thought primarily more of the importance of *the role* of teaching (and, perhaps, the need to attract more able recruits to the role).

The significant variable effects are mostly expected. Larger minorities of females and suburbans than of males and urbans are 'optimists', and larger majorities of males and urbans are critical 'idealists'. Again, the more students are academically able, the more they are both 'pessimists' and 'idealists' about teacher status. The largest



difference is between different specialities; humanities majors are much more evenly divided than science majors, who are hugely on the side of the idealist position that teachers are inadequately appreciated. The 24% of optimists who think teachers are appreciated shrinks to 18% of males, 14% of urbans, 6% of science majors and 4% of 'A' students.

These findings are by no means wholly negative. Of course, it is not good if teaching and teachers are not appreciated properly in a society. Nonetheless, it is good if young people are critically aware of this under-appreciation since that implies respect for their teachers and/or for their role in society. It offers the reformer something to appeal to.

### Status as a Factor in Recruitment

The evidence clearly shows that the status of teachers is perceived by school-leavers as one of the main reasons for not considering teaching as a career. Many are planning to become teachers, but there is a lack of diversity amongst them. Important subgroups are seriously underrepresented. Teaching is not an attractive profession for urbans, science majors, and the academically-able. Improving the status of the profession might be the way to attract these groups. The students were consulted regarding such a strategy and Table 17, shows their responses.

**Table 17: Could higher status attract more teachers? %**

Variables	Higher status can attract more teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Male	20	48	68	21	11	9	2	3.8
	Female	24	44	68	21	11	9	2	3.8
Social group	Suburb	22	47	69	20	11	10	1	3.8
	Urban	23	46	69	22	11	8	3	3.8
School system	American	21	45	66	20	11	9	2	3.7
	Normal	23	46	69	22	11	9	2	3.9
Speciality	Humanities	23	46	69	19	10	8	2	3.7
	Science	21	46	67	23	11	9	2	3.8
Year score	A	23	44	67	24	11	9	2	3.8
	B	22	47	69	19	12	8	4	3.8
	C	21	48	69	22	9	8	1	3.8
	D	22	45	67	21	12	10	2	3.8
Total %		22	46	68	21	11	9	2	3.8

Eleven per cent of respondents are not convinced it would make a difference and a further 21% are unsure. The other two-thirds think it would make a difference. (Arguably, the 22% who believe this strongly are more likely to include those who are



put off teaching by their perceptions of its status.<sup>12)</sup> For once, all the variable effects are minimal.

#### 4. Attitudes towards teachers' institutions

According to the previous survey, more than half of the Kuwaiti public perceive the College of Basic Education as low status (and lower than the Education College – for secondary teacher-training<sup>13)</sup>). In this survey, respondents were presented with two items and asked to indicate the extent of their agreement with each:

- *The College of Basic Education has high status (agree/disagree)<sup>14</sup>*
- *Academically able students are likely to enter teachers' institutions (agree/disagree)*

Table 18 shows that more than half of the respondents (57%) have a definitely negative attitude toward the College of Basic Education, and only 20% students are positive. 23% are unsure, perhaps because they have not enough knowledge about the college, or because they are inhibited by a high respect for their teachers.

Table 18: The status of the College of Basic Education is high? %

Variables	The College of Basic Education has High Status	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Male	5	16	21	23	57	44	13	2.6
	Female	4	15	19	24	56	41	15	2.5
Social group	Suburb	8	24	32	30	34	26	8	2.9
	Urban	2	7	9	18	80	59	21	2.3
School system	American	5	14	19	20	63	46	17	2.5
	Normal	5	16	21	26	52	40	12	2.6
Speciality	Humanities	6	18	24	31	45	34	11	2.7
	Science	4	12	16	15	69	52	17	2.3
Year score	A	0	2	2	21	77	52	25	2.0
	B	0	4	4	27	69	51	18	2.2
	C	9	25	34	19	47	41	6	2.9
	D	11	30	41	26	34	28	6	3.2
Total %		5	15	20	23	57	43	14	2.5

There are some significant variable effects for year scores, specialisms, and social groups. Yet again, much higher proportions of those with high academic abilities and of science majors take the critical option, and the percentage of critical urbans (80%)

<sup>12</sup> See previous footnote.

<sup>13</sup> It has been mentioned in earlier chapters that there are two teachers' institutions in Kuwait; the College of Basic Education, which is part of the general organization for vocational education and training, and the Education College, which is part of the University of Kuwait. The former prepares for primary teaching, and the latter prepares for secondary teaching.

<sup>14</sup> In this survey, the College of Basic Education is singled out because it is the focus of the later case-study.



is more than twice as high as that of critical suburbans (34%). Suburbans and the least academically able respondents are the most likely to take a positive view of the status of the College. Only 2% of the 'A' students and 4% of the 'B' students do this.

The prevalence among academically able respondents of a critical view of teaching as an occupation has been evident throughout this data analysis. Table 19 suggests that all respondents are aware of the position of these more able students.

**Table 19: Are academically able students likely to enter teacher education? %**

Variables	Academically able likely to enter teacher education	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	<i>Male</i>	5	13	18	19	63	43	20	2.4
	<i>Female</i>	6	15	21	18	61	40	21	2.5
Social* group	<i>Suburb</i>	9	19	28	34	36	26	10	2.9
	<i>Urban</i>	3	10	13	2	85	56	29	2.0
School system	<i>American</i>	5	14	19	18	63	44	19	2.4
	<i>Normal</i>	7	15	22	17	61	40	21	2.5
Speciality	<i>Humanities</i>	7	17	24	19	56	36	20	2.5
	<i>Science</i>	4	12	16	18	68	45	23	2.4
Year score	<i>A</i>	4	4	8	17	75	48	27	2.1
	<i>B</i>	4	12	16	16	68	41	27	2.3
	<i>C</i>	12	20	32	16	52	36	16	2.8
	<i>D</i>	4	21	25	18	57	39	18	2.5
Total %		6	14	20	18	62	41	21	2.4

Almost two-thirds think (know!) that teacher education is an unlikely destination for the most able students. Science majors may be more likely than humanities majors to take this view. More interestingly, 85% of urbans, as against just 36% of suburbans, believe it, while another 34% of the suburbans 'sit on the fence' for this question (compared to only 2% of uncertain urbans). Of course, the small numbers of academically able students who are considering teaching are virtually all in suburban classrooms, and perhaps their friends, too, would often know of their intention.

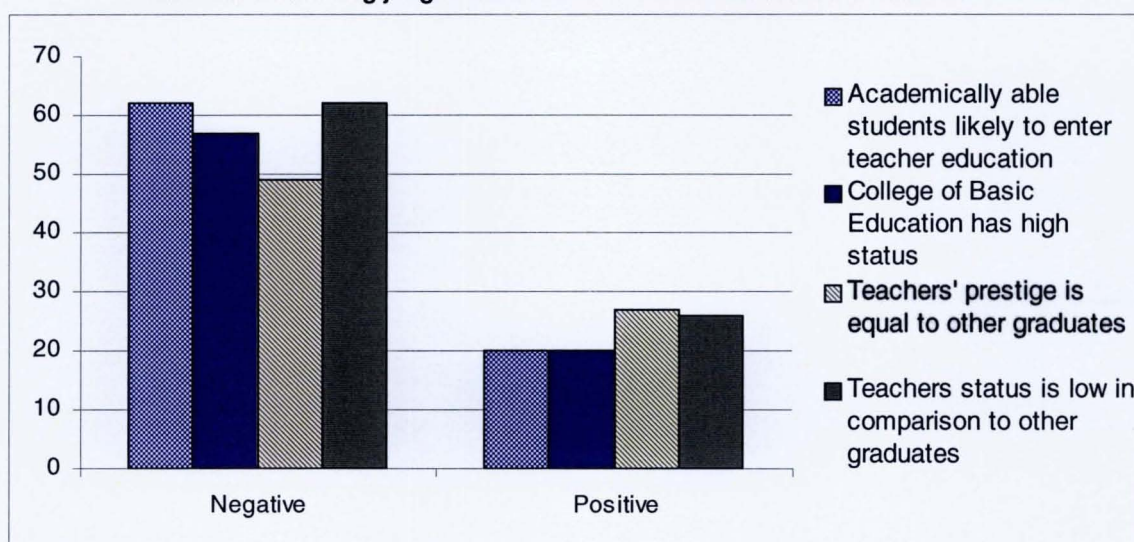


### **Part Three: Further Analyses**

In this section I shall correlate attitudes on teacher status and teacher education, and consider comparisons with England.

The table below combines four items from the questionnaire to deliver an overall impression of the school-leavers' attitude to the status of teachers. It joins the 5-scale data to the 2-scales, and omits the 'hesitant' responses from the display.

**Table 20: Combining judgments of teacher status and teacher education**



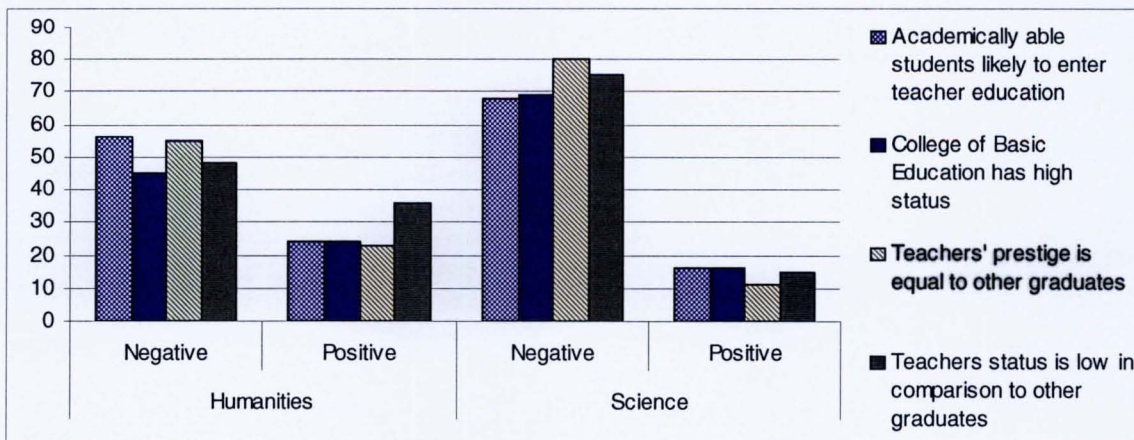
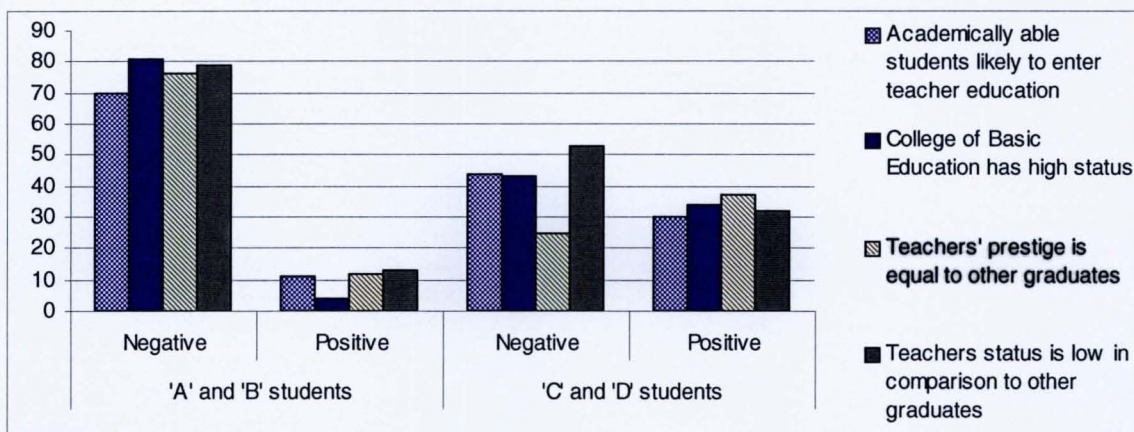
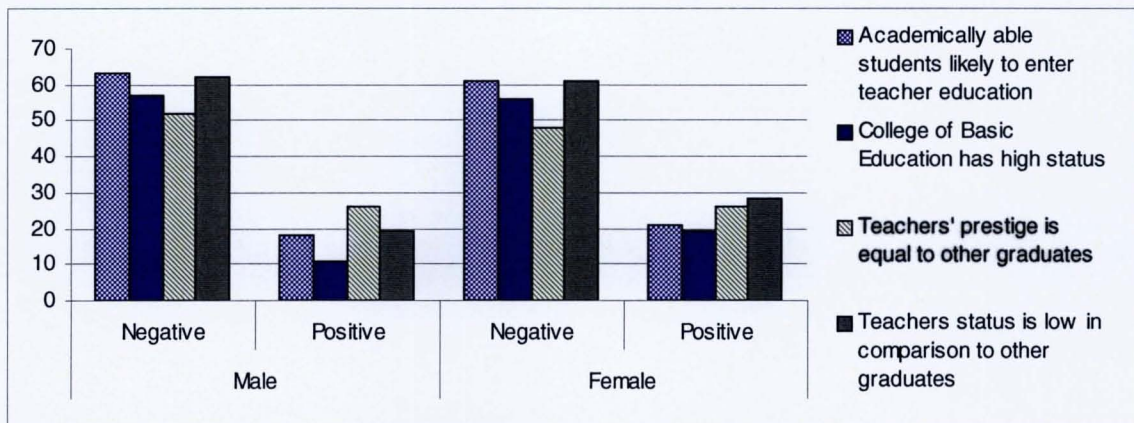
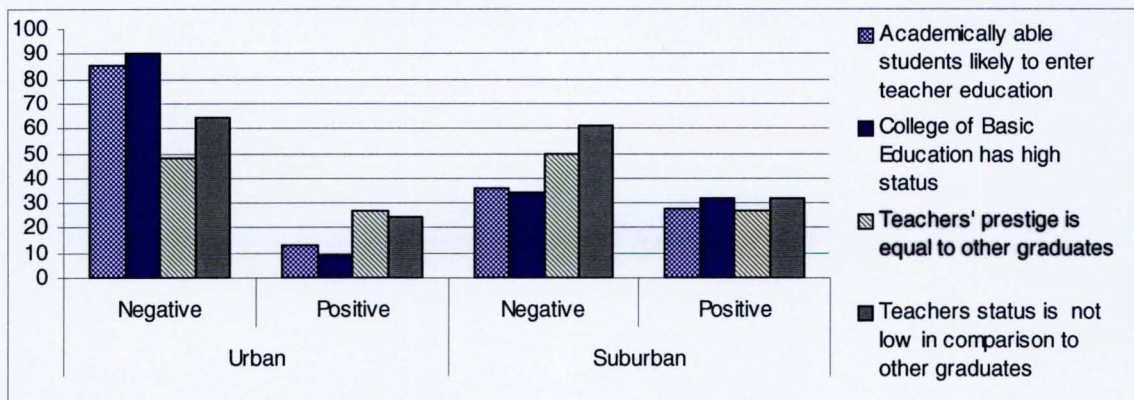
The responses to four selected items from the questionnaire show clearly how school-leavers view teacher status. The table shows broadly that on average, 23% of responses are positive regarding the status of teachers and teacher education and 58% of responses are negative. We have examined in section two the variable effects, and identified many variations in perceptions. The next tables illustrate those effects on attitudes towards teachers and teacher institutions. The four variables and four items are intended to sum up the investigation of this survey.<sup>15</sup>

The tables show that the least effect is within genders. Males and females have similar views. In particular, the numbers of negative responses are almost identical, yet females have slightly more positive views.

<sup>15</sup> The school type variable is not used since it had no significant effects throughout.



**Tables 20 A: Combining judgments of teacher status and teacher education, across variables**



The largest variations in replies are across student abilities. Academically able students have far more 'cynical' views than the less academically able ones. An average of 75% of able students have negative views against an average of only 9% with positive views. On the other hand, the less able students have almost equal numbers of positive and negative views.

There is also a large variation in responses among social groups and specialisms. Urban school leavers appear to be much more negative than suburbans in regards to teachers' status, however, they both share similar views regarding the status of teacher education. Humanities majors are more optimistic in their views than science majors in regard to the status of both teachers and teacher education.

These tables also show that academically able students and science majors have the least positive views among all sub-groups.

### *Comparisons with England*

The standing of the teaching profession from a school-leaver's perspective in any country could be described as unique in some respects, and universal in others. As has been explained in chapter two, the status of teachers has been a matter of worldwide concern. However, the extent of negative and positive judgments about teaching as a career fluctuates according to the cultural and political impacts on the profession. In England, there have been numerous studies (HESA, 2001, ATL, 1993, Spear, M, Gould, k., and Lee, B., 2000), over the last twenty years of the standing of teachers and its effect on the attitude of undergraduates (the main source which supplies teachers) considering teaching as a career.<sup>16</sup> The status of teachers in both England and Kuwait is perceived as a predominantly negative. However, the pattern of positive and negative attitudes towards teaching in England differs significantly from those uncovered here. In England people enter the teaching profession mainly because they like to work with children and they find teaching challenging, where in Kuwait none of those who are interested in teaching perceive working with children or the challenging aspect of the profession as *the main* attractive ingredient of teaching, though many consider working with children as one factor in considering teaching.

Poor salaries, pupils' poor behaviour, and low status are prominent negative aspects of teaching in England, whereas in Kuwait teachers' salaries are perceived as a

---

<sup>16</sup> Donnelly, J., 2002, *Science and Mathematics Undergraduates' Attitudes to Secondary School Teaching as a career*: Final Report, CSSME, School of Education, University of Leeds.

prominent positive aspect. Pupils' behaviour is not a problem, since students have great respect for teachers (confirmed in the public survey), and regard them as authoritative workers; pupils' behaviour towards adults, in broad terms, reflects Arabic culture and traditions. In both societies, respondents saw teachers' workload as burdensome. The difference is that in England, objectively, the teachers' work is conditioned not only by the legitimate pressure of the job, but by direct government intervention, and by the bureaucratic procedures associated with National Curriculum assessment, accountability and the quality assurance mechanism, as well as by the overload. In fact, teachers in Kuwait work on average of 15 hours a week, with 2 to 3 hours a day actual teaching, and the rest of the school day (which ends at 1 pm) for preparations. Yet whereas in England workload is not necessarily a deterrent to potential recruits to the profession,<sup>17</sup> in Kuwait, it is the most prominent deterrent.

In Donnelly's study (2002), 19% of the final-year science majors were interested in entering teacher education.<sup>18</sup> A similar proportion (16%) of the science students in this study are interested in doing so. This relatively low supply of science teachers appears to be a matter of concern not only in Kuwait.

### **Summary**

School-leavers see teachers as having a low medium status in comparison with other professions. This is perceived as one of the main disadvantages of the profession. In regard to teacher education, the majority of students do not believe that the College of Basic Education has high status, and most students are aware of the fact that teacher education is not generally considered to be suitable for academically able students.

The data indicate that, school leavers' perceptions of 'prestige' and 'honour' overlap but do not coincide. Doctors and politicians are the most honoured professionals, and most recognized as having high prestige.

In this survey, we have identified significant variations among variables; of these, variation by school system is the least significant factor. School-leavers' year scores play a very significant part: as respondents' academic ability increases, attitudes to

---

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Spear, M, et al., 2000, Who would be a teacher? A review of factors motivating and demotivating prospective and practising teachers. Slough, NFER, Cited by Donnelly, J., (2002), *Science and Mathematics Undergraduates' Attitudes to Secondary School Teaching as a career*: Final Report, CSSME, School of Education, University of Leeds.

the status of teachers shift firmly in a progressively negative direction. The social group variable is also a very significant factor. School-leavers from different social groups seem to have different views of their career choices and different attitudes towards teachers and teaching. Urban school-leavers are more particular in regard to status than suburban school-leavers. In regard to school leavers' specialism, science majors are more pessimistic or 'idealist' in the sample the humanities majors.

A high percentage (28%) of school leavers desire to become teachers. Perhaps some Kuwaitis are not demanding in regard to status when considering career options, although even more students might have considered teaching if it had higher status. Those who are considering teaching are attracted mainly by a perception that teaching is potentially a good career, with its good salary, long holidays, and easy access. This package may have compensated for teachers' lower status.

There are, also, significant differences for specialism, year score, and social group when school-leavers are considering career options. This survey found that science majors, academically able, and urban school leavers are much less interested in teaching than others. On the whole, those who are most likely to be interested in teaching are the suburbans and the least able students. This situation is likely to have an effect on the status of teacher education and of teaching itself.



## Chapter Six: Data Analysis for Teacher Survey

### Introduction

In the previous two chapters the public's and the school-leavers' views on the status of teachers and teacher education in Kuwait have been investigated. In this chapter teachers' own perceptions of their professional status and their teacher training will be explored.

### *The Sample*

1188 teachers from 36 schools took part in this survey<sup>1</sup>, which represents around 4% of the teachers in public schools<sup>2</sup>, and 1127 responded, a return rate of 94.8%. Nine variables were studied. Three of these were controlled: gender, social group<sup>3</sup>, and school level (Table 1). The others are age, qualifications, nationality, speciality, years of experience, and teaching hours. All variables were identified from the general information section of the questionnaire, except 'social group', which was identified from the school location.

Table 1: Controlled variables

Social groups	School level	Schools by gender	No. of teachers
Urban	4 Primary	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
	4 Intermediate	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
	4 Secondary	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
Mixed	4 Primary	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
	4 Intermediate	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
	4 Secondary	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
Suburban	4 Primary	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
	4 Intermediate	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
	4 Secondary	2 Male schools	66
		2 Female schools	66
3 social groups	36 schools	18 Male/18 Female schools	1188

<sup>1</sup> Details on the sampling techniques used (block and stratified sampling), are in Chapter Three.

<sup>2</sup> There are 31,716 teachers in public schools, (Kuwait Statistics 2005/06).

<sup>3</sup> The sample was distributed more or less equally across Kuwait's six regions, which are recognised to be two urban, two suburban (Bedouin) and two mixed. Note that teachers from one kind of region may be working in another kind of region, particularly since one group, suburban teachers (particularly suburban women teachers), are more strongly represented in the body of teachers. To avoid misunderstanding, I shall refer to 'teachers in urban (suburban) schools' rather than to 'urban (suburban) teachers' in this chapter. However, my travelling round the schools during these surveys has tended to confirm the widespread belief that the proportion of suburban teachers in urban schools is very small – whereas the proportion of non-Kuwaiti teachers in these schools is substantial.



Table 1A demonstrates the number of responses in relation to each of the nine variables.

**Table 1A: Numbers of Responses by Variables**

Variables		Total
Gender	Female	599
	Males	528
Social group	Civil	342
	Mix	393
	Suburbs	392
School level	Primary	396
	Intermediate	393
	Secondary	338
Teacher qualification	Bachelor	331
	Bachelor in Education	663
	Diploma	102
	Others	23
Nationality	Kuwaitis	775
	Non-Kuwaitis	352
Teaching hour p/w The mean is 12.1 (std. Deviation 4.7)	1-11 hours	48% (556)
	12+ hours	38% (447)
Year of birth	40s	29
	50s	461
	60s	197
	70s	343
	80s	45
Years of experience	1-10	576
	11-19	327
	20+	130
Speciality	Electives	23%
	Humanities	47%
	Science	30%
Total		1127

The distributions by gender, social group and school level are broadly equal or similar.

9% have a diploma, the others a bachelor degree. Just 2% have a masters degree.<sup>4</sup>

Non-Kuwaiti teachers are almost a third of the sample

12 working hours pw is the average (Table 1B). The sample was divided between below and above this average.<sup>5</sup>

The number of older teachers and those with 20+ years of experience was not wholly expected, given that there is an option of early retirement after 15 years. It seems many choose to stay at work.

The distribution by speciality vividly reflects the curriculum / timetable dominance of humanities

**Table 1B**

Average working hours p/w		Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Nationality	Kuwaitis	11.6382	680	4.82431
	Non-Kuwaitis	13.1894	322	4.27827
School level	Primary	13.4101	378	5.17427
	Intermediate	11.9673	306	4.00478
	Secondary	10.7862	318	4.35689
Total		12.1367	1002	4.70979

Kuwaiti teachers average slightly fewer working hours than non-Kuwaitis. Also, average working hours decline from primary to intermediate to secondary levels. However, there were

no significant differences in teachers' responses in relation to their working hours apart from one question.

<sup>4</sup> Perhaps this is because the financial benefit of this further qualification is small (£50 extra a month).

<sup>5</sup> In Kuwait there are no part time teachers; those who work less than 12 hours per week are full-time.



The teacher questionnaire contained 34 questions, 33 close-ended questions and a final open question that invited recommendations on ways to improve their status. Almost half of these questions match questions put to the school-leavers.

As in other chapters, this chapter will first provide a summary presentation of the general responses to the close-ended items to give an initial overall view and for easy reference in making cross-survey comparisons. It will then move to analysis and discussion of individual questions and clusters of questions in a revised sequence that is determined by their relation to the four main themes of the questionnaire and the chapter: *teacher status, teaching in Kuwait, teacher education, and improving teachers' status*. A major focus will be the variable effects for each theme. A concluding section will place some items into new clusters to observe interesting correlations and it will make some comparisons with partly similar surveys elsewhere.

### **Part One: The Overall Picture**

**Table 2: Teachers on Teacher Status %**

Teacher status	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree				
Teacher status is low in comparison with other university graduate occupations.	26	37	63	6	31	25	6				
Teachers have the same prestige as other university graduate occupations.	7	22	29	10	61	47	14				
Secondary teachers have more status than primary.	23	46	69	9	22	18	4				
Teachers are not honoured now as before.	48	35	82	5	12	10	2				
Teachers are appreciated in this country	7	18	25	26	49	32	17				
Higher status can attract people to enter the profession	5	27	32	20	48	37	11				
The status of teachers on a scale of 10	SCALE										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean
	12	8	12	9	26	15	7	7	2	2	4.6
Are you satisfied with your status as a teacher?	Of course yes		Yes		Sometimes		No		Off course not		
	5		13		25		30		28		
As teachers, we are bothered by our image	Yes			Maybe			Don't know			No	
	66			19			6			9	
I will encourage my children to enter the teaching profession	Certainly true			True	Don't Know		False			Certainly false	
	5			11	18		25			42	
Teachers have low status yet more people are entering the profession	12			29	18		26			15	



Table 2A: Most honourable/prestigious profession %

Other professions	Doctors	Clerics	Teachers	Politician	Police	Lawyer	Nurse	Others
Most honourable	34	31	22	8	2	1	0	0
Most prestigious	36	11	3	38	9	3	0	0

Table 2B: Teachers on Teaching %

Teaching	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Teaching is uninteresting but pays well.	10	23	33	7	60	40	20
Teachers require special skills and expertise	Yes	Not much	Sub total	Sub total	Don't know	No	
	62	32	94	6	4	2	

Table 2C: Teachers on Teacher Education %

Teacher education institutions	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The College of Basic Education has high status	6	29	35	23	42	33	8
The Education College has high status	9	38	46	23	31	26	5
Academically able students are the most likely to enter the College of Basic Education	5	17	22	18	61	48	13
Academically able students are the most likely to enter the Education College.	5	28	32	20	48	40	8
The curricula in teacher education colleges are adequate.	Certainly true	True	Sub total	Don't Know	Sub total	False	Certainly False
	2	18	20	31	48	35	13
The curricula in teacher education colleges are challenging.	2	13	15	29	56	42	14
The curricula in teacher education colleges adopt new technologies.	5	30	35	30	35	27	8
Teacher education is the last option for academically able students.	26	36	62	15	23	15	8
Teacher education colleges have little prestige in Kuwait.	12	35	47	20	33	25	8

Table 2D: Teachers on Improving Teacher Status %

Ways to develop the status	Yes	Maybe	Don't know	No
More selectivity	78	15	4	4
Good Teaching	66	21	3	11
Increasing salaries	63	23	4	10
Professional and academic autonomy	59	27	4	11
Increasing teacher training for primary teachers	58	17	8	17
Increasing teacher training for secondary teachers	54	20	12	14
More female teachers	28	27	13	33



Table 2E: Main Attraction / Main Disadvantage %

Main attraction of teaching	Salary	Holidays	Single gender	Fits with family	Challenging	Career progression	Working with children	Prestige	Work load	Friendly environment	Supervision
	39	24	9	8	5	5	4	4	2	1	0
Main disadvantage of teaching	Work load	Supervision	Career progression	Salary	Prestige	Unfriendly environment	Fits with family	Challenging	Working with children	Single gender	
	57	9	9	12	4	3	2	2	2	1	

### **Part Two: Tabulations and Thematic Analyses**

These findings will now be analysed by grouping them into the four themes listed earlier and looking at correlations and apparent contradictions, also by looking for significant variable effects.

#### **1. Teachers' perceptions of their professional status**

Table3: Teachers on teacher status: Summary

Table 1: Teachers on teacher status: Summary								
Teachers perceptions of their status	Agree / True/ Yes	Hesitant/ Maybe/ Don't know	Disagree / Untrue/ No					
Teacher status is low in comparison with other university graduate occupations.	63	6	31					
Teachers have the same prestige as other university graduate occupations.	29	10	61					
As teachers, we are bothered by our image.	66	25	9					
Are you satisfied with your status as a teacher?	18	25	58					
I will encourage my children to enter the teaching profession	16	18	67					
Teachers are not honoured now as before	82	5	12					
Teachers are appreciated in this country	25	26	49					
Secondary teachers have more status than primary	69	9	22					
The status of teachers in a scale of 1 to 10 is 4.6								
Most honourable / prestigious profession	Doctors	Clerics	Teachers	Politician	Police	Lawyer	Nurse	Others
Most honourable	34	31	22	8	2	1	0	0
Most prestigious	36	11	3	38	9	3	0	0



The summary data presented in Table 3 show a clear and consistent majority of teachers responding negatively to questions about teacher status. Approximately two thirds in each case think teaching is lower status than other professions, that teachers lack the prestige of other graduates, that teachers are bothered by their image, and would definitely not encourage their own children to follow them into teaching. Almost as many deny that teachers are satisfied with their status. Only one-quarter are convinced that teachers are appreciated in Kuwait. And if the case is bad enough with teachers generally, it seems to be still worse with primary teachers: two-thirds of teachers believe their status is lower than that of secondary teachers. It is perhaps most thought-provoking of all that a massive 82% see teachers' status as in decline, almost half believing this strongly.

There is a clear general sense of disenchantment in these replies. They are gloomier, even, than the school-leavers responses for the three questions above that were also put to school-leavers.

Teachers clearly distinguish between the two concepts of honour and prestige (especially in the cases of teachers and politicians) and seem to view their own profession as more honourable than prestigious. Teaching gets only 3% of the votes for 'most prestigious' profession, while doctors and politicians win out here. Rather more positively, 22% regard it as 'the most honourable' profession, which places it third behind doctors and clerics.

**Table 4: Their perceived status (on a 1-10 scale)**

Teachers perception of their status (1-10)		SCALE											
		Lowest 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Highest 10	Mean	Std.
Gender **	Male	16	9	13	8	22	17	7	6	2	2	4.5	2.3
	Female	9	7	10	11	31	14	7	8	3	2	5.0	2.2
Social group**	Urban	13	8	13	11	27	12	5	7	1	2	4.4	2.1
	Semi	17	10	13	8	22	15	5	7	2	1	4.3	2.3
	Suburban	6	7	10	9	29	17	9	8	3	3	5.2	2.1
School level**	Primary	10	8	9	11	29	12	8	7	4	2	4.8	2.2
	Intermediate	11	9	16	9	24	19	6	6	1	1	4.6	2.1
	Secondary	16	8	11	8	26	15	6	8	2	2	4.6	2.3
Specialities**	Electives	1	7	13	10	26	15	14	7	3	4	5.4	2.1
	Humanities	13	11	11	7	31	14	5	5	1	1	4.3	2.2
	Science	16	4	11	16	29	8	4	6	3	2	4.4	2.1
Average		12	8	12	9	26	15	7	7	2	2	4.6	2.2

Teachers placed their own status on average at 4.6 out of 10, which is slightly lower than school-leavers and the public responding to the same question. As already been



noticed, such a result is difficult to interpret in isolation – is it ‘moderate’ or ‘low’? In the light of the negative responses just reported to the other questions, it might best be interpreted as ‘low’. Independently of that, however, responses to this question are a good opportunity to begin to observe variable effects in teachers’ status perceptions.

The statistically significant differences in replies are across the four variables of social group, school level, gender, and specialities (Table 4). Male teachers, teachers in urban schools and teachers in intermediate and secondary schools think (even) worse of their status than female teachers, teachers in suburban schools, and teachers in primary schools. Teachers of elective subjects are more optimistic than science and humanities teachers.

**Table 5: Teacher status is lower than other graduate occupations %**

Teacher status is low in comparison with other graduate occupations		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender **	Male	31	43	<b>74</b>	7	<b>19</b>	16	3	<b>3.8</b>	1.1
	Female	24	34	<b>58</b>	7	<b>35</b>	28	7	<b>3.4</b>	1.3
Social group**	Urban	27	38	<b>65</b>	7	<b>28</b>	23	5	<b>3.6</b>	1.2
	Semi	31	37	<b>68</b>	7	<b>24</b>	20	4	<b>3.7</b>	1.2
	Suburban	21	35	<b>56</b>	7	<b>38</b>	30	8	<b>3.3</b>	1.3
School level**	Primary	21	35	<b>56</b>	8	<b>36</b>	28	8	<b>3.3</b>	1.3
	Intermediate	28	40	<b>68</b>	4	<b>28</b>	23	5	<b>3.6</b>	1.2
	Secondary	34	37	<b>71</b>	7	<b>23</b>	20	3	<b>3.8</b>	1.1
Working hours**	1-11	30	39	<b>69</b>	7	<b>24</b>	21	3	<b>3.7</b>	0.6
	12+	25	38	<b>63</b>	7	<b>30</b>	23	7	<b>3.5</b>	1.2
Years of experience**	1-10	23	34	<b>57</b>	7	<b>36</b>	29	7	<b>3.4</b>	1.3
	11-19	31	40	<b>71</b>	7	<b>21</b>	18	3	<b>3.8</b>	1.2
	20+	34	41	<b>75</b>	4	<b>20</b>	17	3	<b>3.8</b>	1.1
Total		26	37	<b>63</b>	6	<b>31</b>	25	6	<b>3.5</b>	1.2

That only 31% of the sample, and only 6% of these strongly, reject the statement that the status of teachers is low certainly shows that the self-image, at any rate, of teachers is low. Table 5 shows that male teachers and those in mid-career are particularly gloomy. And, although teachers perceive secondary teachers as enjoying better status than primary teachers, secondary teachers are significantly more likely than other teachers to perceive the status of teachers generally as low. Women, those teaching in suburban schools, primary teachers, and young teachers with less than 10 years of experience are significantly less likely to take the gloomy view (though in all these cases, more than half still do take it).

For young teachers, comparing their status with friends starting out on other careers, the differences would be less dramatic than they may later become. They can also



look forward to the better status that may come with promotion, while a lack of career progression may be a factor affecting the perceptions of many older teachers.

**Table 6: Teacher status is equal to other graduate occupations %**

Teachers have the same prestige as other university graduate occupations		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender**	Male	1	19	20	11	68	51	17	2.3	1.0
	Female	9	23	32	10	58	45	13	2.7	1.2
Social group**	Urban	6	20	26	9	64	49	15	2.5	1.1
	Semi	3	21	24	11	65	49	16	2.4	1.0
	Suburban	10	23	33	12	55	44	11	2.7	1.2
School level*	Primary	8	23	31	9	60	47	13	2.6	1.1
	Intermediate	4	24	28	10	62	48	14	2.5	1.0
	Secondary	7	17	24	15	61	45	16	2.5	1.1
Total		7	22	29	10	61	47	14	2.5	1.1

This question is almost the mirror image of the previous one, so it is not surprising that the responses fall into very similar patterns, thereby tending to confirm each other. (There is -0.5 correlation with  $p < .01$  between the responses to these two questions). Males, those teaching in urban or mixed schools, and secondary teachers are even less likely than others to see teaching as equal in status to other graduate occupations, while women, teachers in suburban schools and primary teachers are somewhat more likely (or less unlikely!) to believe in this equality.

**Table 7: As teachers, we are bothered by our image %**

As teachers, we are bothered by our image		Yes	Not much	Don't know	No	N
Gender**	Male	72	17	4	6	512
	Female	61	21	7	11	587
Total		66	19	6	9	1099

Two-thirds of teachers, but more male than female teachers, are bothered by their image. The correlation with the previous question is 0.4 with  $p < .01$ , in other words, many of the respondents who believe that teachers have low status are those who are bothered by their image.

**Table 8: Are you satisfied with your status? %**

Are you satisfied with your status?		Of course yes	Yes	Sub total	Sometimes	Sub total	NO	Off course not	Mean	Std.
Gender**	Male	2	13	15	20	65	33	32	2.2	1.1
	Female	7	13	20	27	53	30	23	2.5	2.1
Social* group	Urban	3	12	15	24	61	31	30	2.3	2.0
	Semi	3	11	14	22	64	33	31	2.2	1.1
	Suburban	8	16	24	26	51	29	22	2.6	2.0
Total		5	13	18	25	57	30	27	2.4	2.4

Table 10 shows that the definitely dissatisfied outnumber the definitely satisfied by a factor of 3:1 on average, and of 4:1 in the case of both male teachers and urban



teachers. If the 'sometimes' satisfied are added to the generally satisfied, the gap narrows, but those who are not even sometimes satisfied with their own status still remain more than half the total.

**Table 9: I would encourage my children to enter the profession %**

I would encourage my children to enter the profession	Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
	5	11	16	18	66	23	43	2.1	1.2

Everybody wants the best for their children. Teachers who would definitely not encourage their children to enter the profession perhaps exemplify a low opinion of their own profession (whether because of its status or some other aspect). In fact, two thirds would definitely not encourage their own children to become teachers, and this applies across all the different groups in the sample.

Teachers' responses to the previous two questions seem particularly alarming. Less than 20% of teachers are personally satisfied with their status or would advocate their profession for their children. As for any professionals, to be productive teachers must be satisfied, but the picture here is of widespread unhappiness among teachers. Such low satisfaction and self-image can be presumed to affect the productivity of those who are in the profession.

**Table 10 Teachers are not honoured as they used to be %**

Teachers are not honoured now as before		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender*	Male	44	38	82	6	11	9	2	4.1	1.0
	Female	55	32	87	4	13	10	3	4.4	1.0
Nationalities*	Kuwaitis	50	32	82	5	13	10	3	4.2	1.0
	Non-Kuwaitis	42	41	83	6	11	10	1	4.1	1.0
Years of experience*	1-10	45	34	79	6	13	11	2	4.1	1.1
	11-19	54	27	81	4	13	9	4	4.2	1.1
	20+	52	39	91	2	5	4	1	4.4	0.7
Total		48	35	83	5	12	10	2	4.2	1.0

This question was designed to identify teachers' perceptions of both their moral standing with the public and whether this standing was in decline. It emerges that more than four out of five teachers believe they are not honoured as much as before. This is the highest proportion of 'negative' replies in this series of questions. Several factors may have come together here to explain this. One is that a more widely educated public than previously may naturally take, and be perceived to take, a less reverential attitude to teachers. This may influence the views of older teachers in particular. An overlapping point is that school pupils, (and their parents?) may be seen as less politely behaved than in earlier generations, but while this is a common



impression in some Western countries, it is not a usual complaint in Kuwait. A third explanation, and one which would be especially interesting in this thesis, is that the campaign to 'nationalise' the teaching force by rapidly increasing the proportion of native Kuwaiti teachers is being perceived by teachers themselves as reducing the average quality of teachers in everyone's eyes.

Female teachers and Kuwaiti teachers are more likely than men and non-Kuwaitis to believe in this decline *strongly* (more than half of female teachers believe it strongly). Perhaps unsurprisingly, it seems that the more one's years of service the more likely one is to believe it – older teachers may have experienced more acknowledgment in the past. (The surprise may be the still huge majority of young teachers who also believe it. how they could know?). One hypothesis to consider here is that females, non-Kuwaitis, and older teachers may *care* more about the moral element of the status of their professions.

**Table 11: Teachers are appreciated in this country? %**

Teachers are appreciated		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender **	Male	4	16	20	28	52	34	18	2.5	1.0
	Female	8	20	28	26	47	30	17	2.7	1.2
Nationalities**	Kuwaitis	5	17	22	25	53	34	19	2.5	1.1
	Non-Kuwaitis	10	22	32	31	37	25	12	2.9	1.1
Social group**	Urban	3	16	19	30	51	30	21	2.5	1.0
	Semi	5	17	22	25	52	33	19	2.5	1.1
	Suburban	11	21	32	24	44	32	12	2.8	1.2
Total		7	18	25	26	49	32	17	2.6	1.1

Two features of these responses suggest again that 'appreciation' connects more with the 'honour' or moral sense of status than with prestige: first, that now it is females and urbans who are somewhat more 'negative' or critical in their views and, second, that the overall picture is somewhat lighter than for other questions – mainly because of the large number of 'hesitant' responses.

The fact that non-Kuwaiti teachers, despite being paid at only half the rate of Kuwaiti teachers, are significantly likely to feel somewhat more appreciated than Kuwaitis may indicate either that they are easier to please, or that they actually still do attract some extra respect and appreciation, e.g. from students or parents, by comparison with their more highly paid Kuwaiti colleagues.

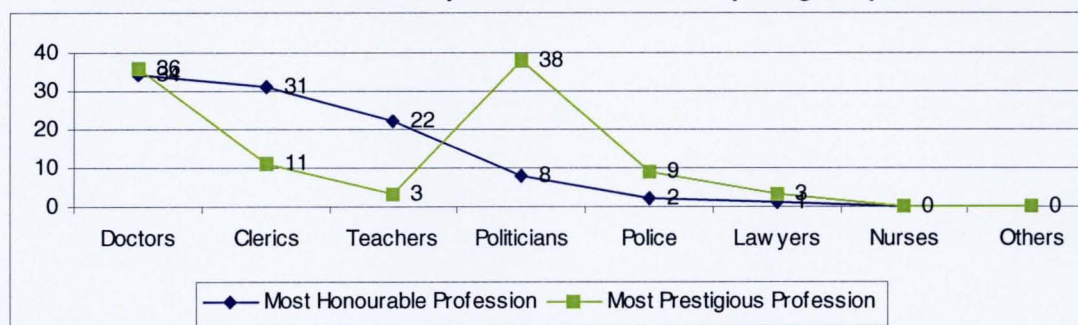


**Table 12: Secondary teacher have more status than primary? %**

Secondary teacher have more status than primary		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender**	Male	15	49	64	10	26	22	4	3.5	1.1
	Female	25	45	70	9	20	16	4	3.7	1.1
School level**	Primary	27	43	70	10	20	16	4	3.7	1.1
	Intermediate	18	47	65	11	25	20	5	3.5	1.1
	Secondary	18	52	70	6	25	22	3	3.6	1.0
Total		23	46	69	9	22	18	4	3.6	1.1

Two thirds of teachers definitely believe that secondary teachers have better status than primary and only 22% definitely disagree. Primary teachers themselves are more likely than others to believe this *strongly*, as are females compared to males (but, as noted in chapter one, primary teachers are, anyway, mainly females). There are many factors that might enter the explanation for this finding. The status of the teacher education colleges could be one. Later in this chapter, and again in the next chapter, I will explore this possible connection further.

**Table 13: The most honourable profession and the most prestigious profession %**



It has been shown that most teachers believe that they are not honoured or appreciated, and that they have lower status than other graduate occupations. Two additional questions further examine their sense of their own standing in the society in comparison to other professions, in both the moral and the morally neutral sense. Like the school-leavers, teachers' views were invited on which professions they considered the most honourable and the most prestigious (Table 12).

Perhaps it is a worldwide conception that teaching is not the most prestigious profession, but for many cultures it is a particularly honourable, or even the most honourable, profession. In the Greek society, for example, teachers are called 'leitourgima', the same word as is used for nurses, doctors and clerics, which means 'serving the community by making differences to it'. Only 5% of school-leavers viewed teachers as the most honourable profession (the same number as view teachers as the most prestigious). And here only 3% of teachers themselves see their profession as the most prestigious. However, they seem to place a higher



*moral* value on their profession, since 22% actually view it as the most honourable, fewer than 'voted' for doctors and clerics but more than voted for politicians, police, lawyers and nurses. Since doctors, clerics, and teachers are all well paid in Kuwait, it would be questionable to assume that 'honourable' is perceived as exactly 'altruistic' in this context, especially when nurses came so low (though that may be because nurses are mostly non-nationals). Struggling to interpret this finding, it seems most likely that teachers view 'honour' as 'making a difference'.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 13A: Correlation: most prestigious/most honourable**

	Prestigious								
	Doctors	Politicians	Police	Lawyers	Clerics	Teachers	Nurses	Others	Total
Honourable	Doctors	218	85	24	8	31	3		369
	Politicians	8	71	5		6		1	91
	Police	1	7	11		2	1	1	23
	Lawyers	2	4	2	7	1	1		17
	Clerics	82	149	25	9	73	5		343
	Teachers	78	88	31	5	14	31	1	248
	Nurses	2	3						5
	Others	1						1	2
	Total	392	407	98	29	127	41	1	1098

There is a statistical correlation between the two sets of responses, though it is only 0.14\*\*. It operates in both directions in the votes for doctors and in just one direction (and in varying degrees) in the votes for other professions. So, for example, a high proportion of the teachers who voted for teachers as the most prestigious profession, 71 out of 91, formed a low proportion of the 407 teachers who voted for teachers as the most honourable profession. The table suggests that there is some small overlap between the two conceptions in the minds of teachers.

## 2. Teachers' views on teaching

This section investigates teachers' perceptions of certain aspects of their own job, specifically, its skill-base, its overall level of interest, its main attractions, and its main disadvantages. These items connect indirectly with status. They are also important in themselves, for example, for what they show about teacher motivations.

<sup>6</sup> The variable effects for both questions were few and small, and not connected with their view of teaching itself.



**Table14: Summary of teachers' views on teaching**

Teachers' views on teaching %				Yes		Not much		Don't know		No			
Teaching requires special skills and expertise				63		31		4		2			
Teaching is uninteresting but pays well.				Agree		Hesitant		Disagree		Mean		Std.	
				36		8		56		2.6		1.3	
The most Positive and the most Negative aspects of teaching	Salary	Holidays	Gender divided	Fits with family	Challenge	Career progression	Working with children	Prestige	Work load	Environment	Supervision		
Positives	39	24	9	8	5	5	4	4	2	1	0		
Negatives	12	-	1	2	2	9	2	4	57	3	9		

Table 14 provides an overall summary of the findings in this section. More than half of teachers believe that teaching does require special skills and expertise, but more than a third do not think this. The double-description 'uninteresting but pays well' risks confusion, as seen in the school-leaver survey. It was designed to convey a certain dismissive or cynical overview of teaching, and that only 8% were hesitant in their responses suggests the teachers understood this. Disturbingly, however, that it attracted 36% agreement implies that *at least* that proportion of teachers find their job uninteresting. It is also disturbing that the two intrinsic or 'moral' aspects of teaching on the list, namely, that it is challenging and that it involves working with children, gained a combined total of only 9% of the choices. Extrinsic motives dominate here, led by the 'materialistic' motives of salaries and holidays and followed by family considerations. Hardly any see their workload as an advantage (though it would be envied in most countries), while well over half include it among the main disadvantages – far more than for any other factor.

Let us move to analyse the questions individually.

**Table 15: Does teaching require special skills and expertise? %**

Teaching requires special skills and expertise?		Yes	Not much	Don't know	No	N
Gender**	Male	59	36	4	1	517
	Female	65	29	4	3	593
Nationalities**	Kuwaitis	61	32	4	3	762
	Non-Kuwaitis	69	29	2	0	348
Total		63	31	4	2	100

Almost two thirds – more females than males and more non-nationals than Kuwaitis – believe that teachers require special skills but this still seems a disgracefully modest percentage. Thirty per cent of teachers in Kuwait think that teaching does not really require special skills and expertise. In other words, they think that anybody could teach.



School-leavers were even more condescending in their view of this – only 56% believed that teaching needs special skills. However, it is more understandable that those outside should have such a view. When it comes to the ‘insiders’, one may wonder about the actual teaching practices of teachers who do not acknowledge the skills and expertise teaching requires. Perhaps they are using dated teaching methods and routines that revolve around transmitting knowledge? One could also think that in order to change the public conceptions, teachers must first change their own conceptions of teaching.

**Table 16: Teaching is uninteresting but pays well? %**

Teaching is uninteresting but pays well?		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender**	Male	6	17	23	7	71	47	24	2.3	1.2
	Female	13	29	42	8	49	33	16	2.9	1.3
Nationalities**	Kuwaitis	12	30	42	7	49	33	16	2.8	1.3
	Non-Kuwaitis	6	13	19	8	72	48	24	2.1	1.0
School level**	Primary	12	29	41	8	51	34	17	2.8	1.3
	Intermediate	10	20	30	7	63	42	21	2.5	1.2
	Secondary	8	24	32	8	60	40	20	2.5	1.2
Qualification**	Diploma	13	28	41	2	57	40	17	2.7	1.4
	Bachelor Ed	12	27	39	7	54	36	18	2.7	1.3
	Bachelor	7	23	30	11	59	39	20	2.5	1.2
	Others	0	6	6	13	81	42	39	1.8	0.7
Total		11	25	36	8	56	37	19	2.6	1.3

Worldwide, probably, teaching is seen as challenging (and interesting at least in that sense), despite its low pay. In Kuwait, the pay is good, and very good for Kuwaiti teachers. This fact opened a door for this rather cynical description ‘*uninteresting but pays well*’ to be tested. It has been revealed in that 55% of school-leavers identify with this description. This survey shows that just 36% of teachers accept it – which implies, as observed above, that *at least* that proportion find their work as teachers uninteresting. Females and primary teachers (who are predominantly female) are substantially more likely to accept it. Also, Kuwaiti teachers are substantially more likely than the non-Kuwaiti teachers to accept this depressing description. The explanation for primary teachers may or may not be connected with the fact that teaching in Kuwaiti primary schools is subject-based. The explanation for the non-Kuwaitis, however, seems obvious – it is surely that they are paid at much lower rates. For some Kuwaiti men, too, it may be a case of dissatisfaction with their salaries that leads them to reject the description, rather than their interest in teaching.

It should be realized, then, that of those who disagreed with the statement, there will be many who did so mainly or only because they do not experience its pay as good.



The implication is that the proportion of teachers who find their work uninteresting is sure to be more, and perhaps a lot more, than the 36% already noted.

Teachers with high qualifications disagree with the statement more than those with diplomas. It could be that they are not content with their wages, or maybe their progressive vision on education makes them recognize teaching as challenging and interesting.

### *Main Attractions and Disadvantages of Teaching*

As was explained in Chapter One, Kuwaitis are increasingly entering the teaching profession, despite what has been observed about its status. Therefore, it is crucial for the study to find out what the profession is offering from a first hand perspective.

**Table 17: The first, second and third main attractions%**

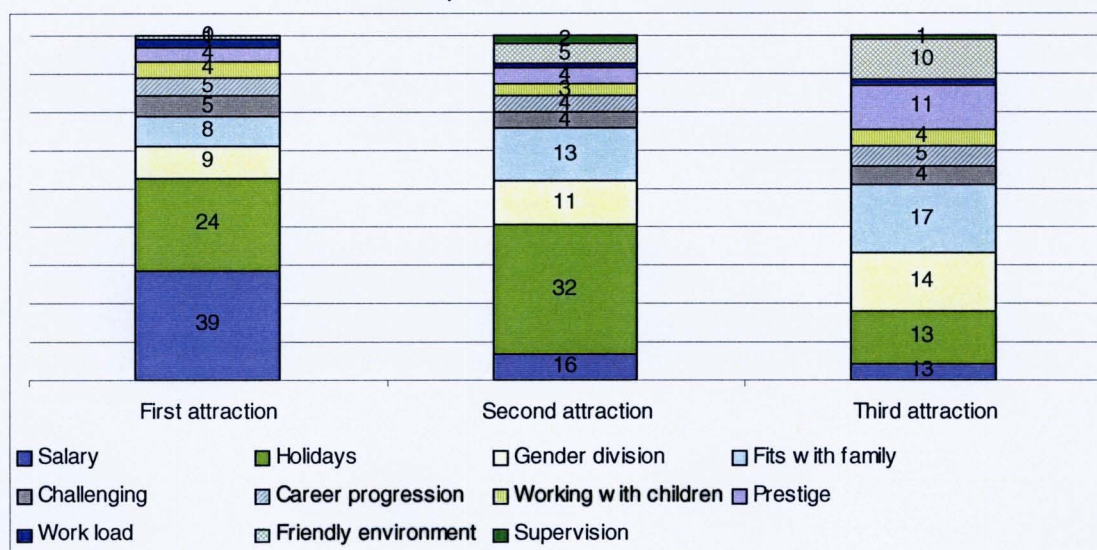


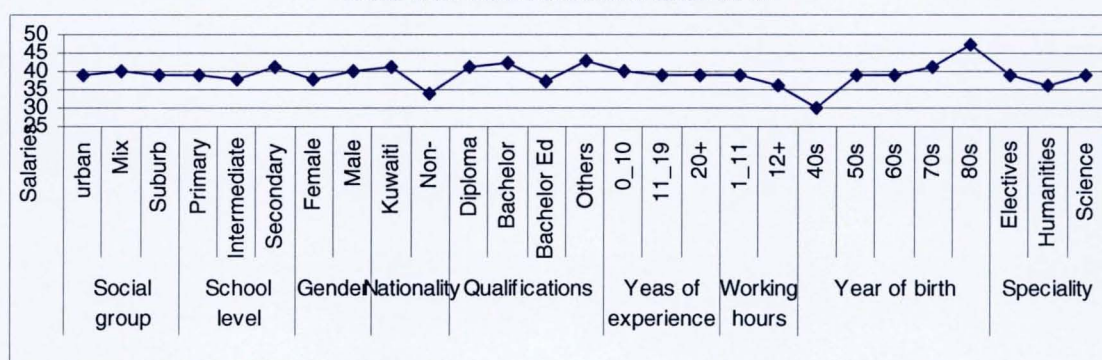
Table 17 breaks down the responses for the first, second and third perceived attractions of teaching (chosen from a provided list of 11 possibilities). It also makes it easy to calculate the proportions of respondents who included each item somewhere in their three choices (see also appendix I, Table 17E). So it is obvious that 68% included teachers' salaries and 69% long holidays, making them by far the most powerful of the listed attractions. Holidays are an attraction of teaching in many systems, but in Kuwait, where teachers have four months off per year (three months in the summer break, and one month for mid term break), they ought indeed to be a reason for attraction. Next in popularity comes the gender-divided working environment, included by 34%, along with the 'fits with family' working hours included by 38%. None of the other seven options provided are popular choices. It should be



noticed that only 13% of respondents view the challenge and creative aspect of teaching as one of its three main attractions. Even more astonishing, perhaps, only 11% include working with children on their list of three (of whom only 4% choose it as their first main attraction).

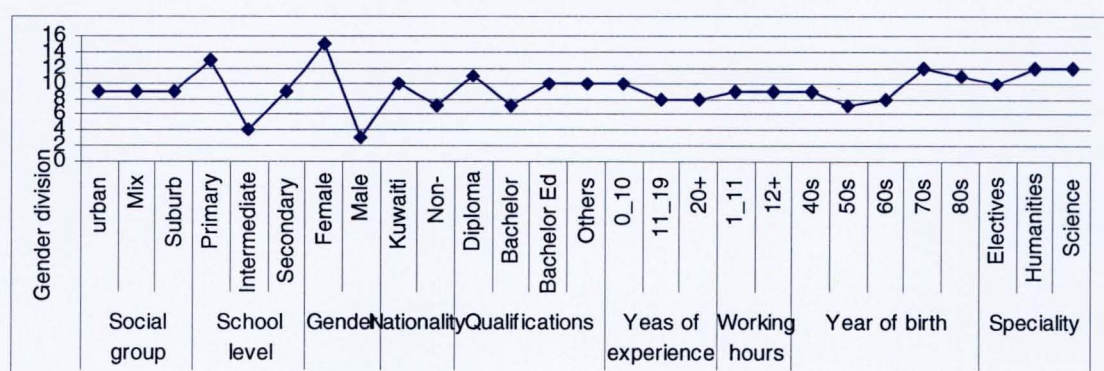
Respondents' *first* choices (which were also dominated by 'salary and 'holidays') have an interest of their own in revealing their values, and they should be now considered more specifically and the variable effects within them.<sup>7</sup> There are significant variations for social group, school level, gender, nationality and qualifications across the attractions (see Appendix I, Table 17E). Tables 17A to 17D below trace the more interesting variable effects for a number of the attractions individually.

**Table 17A: Main attraction: salaries %**



Salaries are a particularly motivating factor for the youngest teachers, and a less motivating factor for non-Kuwaiti teachers, which is not surprising since they earn less than Kuwaitis, and also less motivating for the most mature teachers.

**Table 17B: Main attraction: gender division %**



Among the total of 9% who chose gender division as their first attraction, there is a steady pattern in responses across the social groups, perhaps unexpectedly, but

<sup>7</sup> This also facilitates comparison with the school-leavers who were asked to give only one choice.



there is a predictable large gender effect where 15% of the females chose it but only 3% of males.

**Table 17C: Main attraction: teaching fits with family life %**



The 8% who chose this factor as their most important attraction included higher proportions of suburbans, females, the middle-aged, B.Ed-holders(!) and electives teachers – some of these variations being more predictable than others.

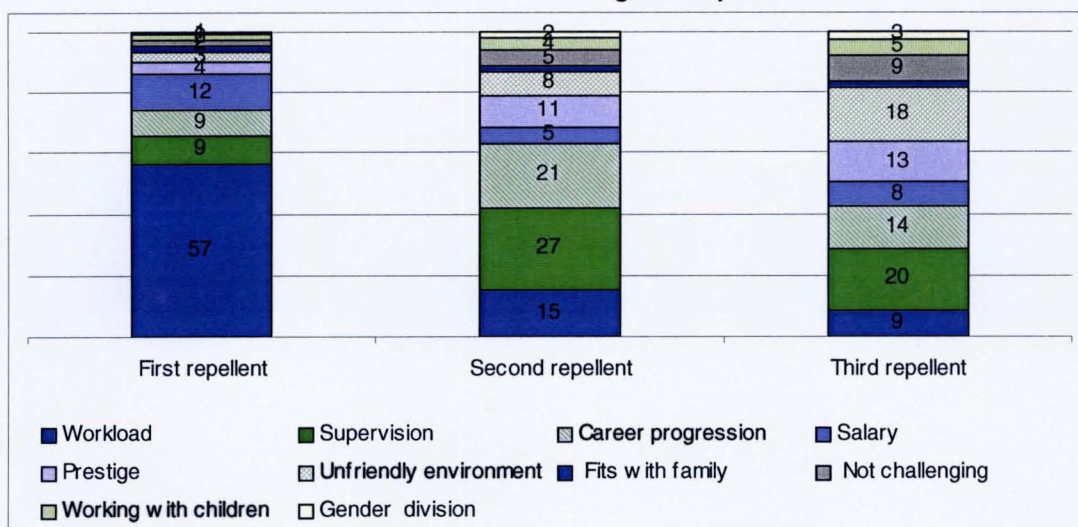
**Table 17D: Main attraction: teaching is challenging %**



Only 5% chose this as their first attraction, which limits the importance of variable effects. However, it is interesting to note that this small proportion included 14% of those with higher qualifications and 10% of non-Kuwaiti teachers.



Table 18: The three most negative aspects %



Shifting from the positive to the negative aspects of teaching, it stands out immediately in Table 18 that no less than 57% of teachers see their workload as the principal disadvantage of teaching, and when the second and third choices are added this proportion rises to a massive majority of 81% who are discontented about workload. Yet, teachers in Kuwait work an average of 12 hours a week, which is 2-3 hours a day. In other societies teaching can be hectic due to the amount of hours and extra hours teachers have to do, so discontent with workload becomes understandable, but in Kuwait this is not the case. Also, some lecturers from the college of Basic Education<sup>8</sup>, who were later invited to comment on this finding, responded in terms that were sympathetic to the teachers' complaints.

*'Do you know how hard and difficult to manage a classroom for one hour and interact, and deliver? It is not easy!'*

*'In comparison with other jobs, people just sit on a desk, we actually work'.*

*'It is an expected finding; the teachers' task is dynamic, never ending.'*

Perhaps, then, the only explanation is the laid-back nature of the society.

When all three choices are considered together (see appendix I, Table 18F), another item is found to be on a majority of teachers' lists. Fifty-six per cent are not pleased with the constant supervision from head teachers, principals, and inspectors. This is a common complaint, I suppose, in any centralized system. It emerges, too, that 44% take a negative view of the career progression opportunities in teaching, and that 28% include the (lack of) prestige – which compares with almost half of the school-leavers. No fewer than 25%, list salary as one of the main disadvantages –

<sup>8</sup> These interviews were part of Phase two, the case study.



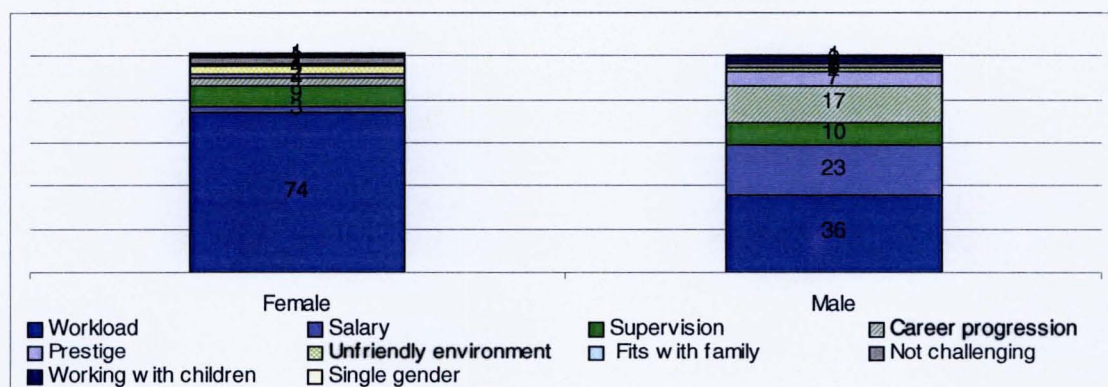
but it must be remembered here that non-Kuwaiti teachers are almost a third of the total.

Twenty-nine per cent see their schools as unfriendly environments (compared, incidentally, with 16% who had opted for 'friendly environment' among their three main advantages of teaching) and list this among their three main disadvantages. Some might see this as a concern. However, it needs to be interpreted culturally. Schools may be no different in ethos from Kuwaiti workplaces generally, which have a reputation for being at once quite intimate and likely to be places where enmities thrive – perhaps in contrast to the 'impersonal' atmosphere of workplaces in Western countries, (including, in my experience, London schools).

Finally, (and rather reprehensibly), 11% of teachers consider working with children as one of its three main disadvantages.

Returning to *the first choice negatives*, Tables 18B –18F study the effects of five variables on the choices of a principal disadvantage. The variables are gender, school level, nationality, qualifications, and age. (There is no social group effect.)

**Table 18A: The first negative: by gender %\*\***



There are some large differences between the genders here. The figures in Table 18A suggest that while workload is the main issue for both women and men teachers; it is much more a female than a male issue (74% of females compared to 36% of males), regardless of social group. This difference may be because women generally have to fit their teaching alongside a larger domestic workload.

On the other hand, males are more likely to point to salary (despite it being recognised as good – at any rate for Kuwaiti nationals), career progression and status. So, 23% of males, but only 3% of females, chose salary as the main negative



about teaching; 17% of males, but only 3% of females, chose (absence of) career progression; and 7% of males, but only 2% of females chose (absence of) prestige. These results also bring out the differences between genders in career opportunities. With more prestigious career options for men that come with high wages, teaching could be regarded as less appealing. Male teachers are more aware from their peers of the higher workloads of some other careers, especially in the construction and petroleum sectors where there are very attractive careers for males in a country that is swiftly developing. Other careers are also available for women, but not necessarily ones that come with career progression and more wages. Opportunities for females to achieve executive positions are still very much limited in Kuwait.

**Table 18B: The first negative: by school level %\*\***

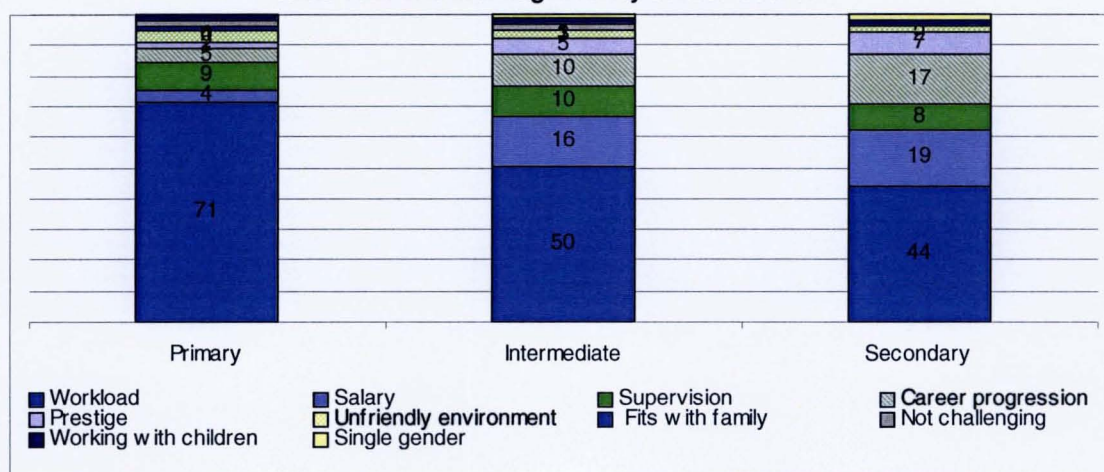
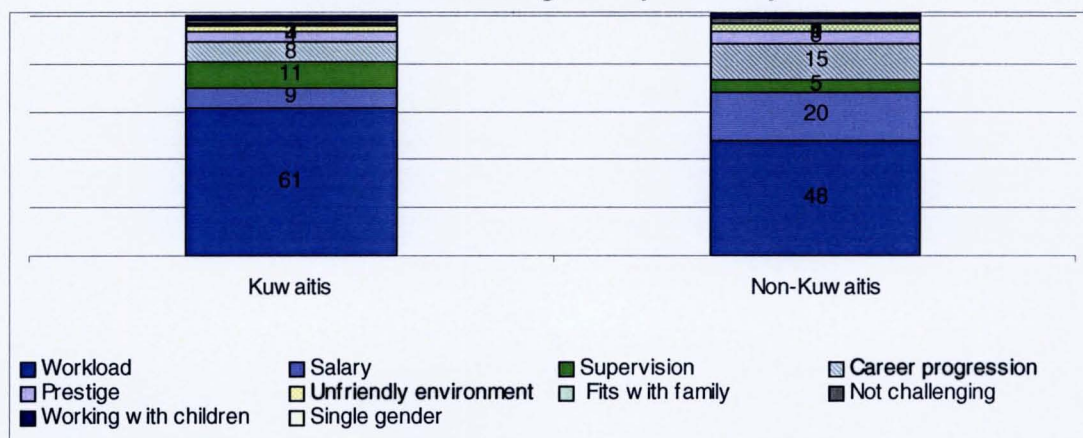


Table 18B also shows up some large and significant differences. The higher the school level the more teachers are likely to be (seriously) dissatisfied with their salaries, career progression, and prestige – and also with the friendliness of the working environment. However, though workload is again the most common first negative at all three levels, those who teach higher levels are less likely than others to choose it as their main complaint. Perhaps working with younger children is more arduous than with older ones. Also, those who teach higher levels might have more sense than others of professional self-worth, and therefore of professional obligation: one cannot teach a physics class unless one has substantial knowledge, whereas, it might be thought, everyone could teach the alphabets. (This seems to fit with the earlier finding that while secondary teachers have higher status, they are also more likely to be pessimistic about status. See table 12 above.) In regard to career progression, perhaps secondary school teachers have an option of changing careers, which makes them wonder ‘what if’; whereas primary teachers have more limited potential careers, which make them more content with their progression.

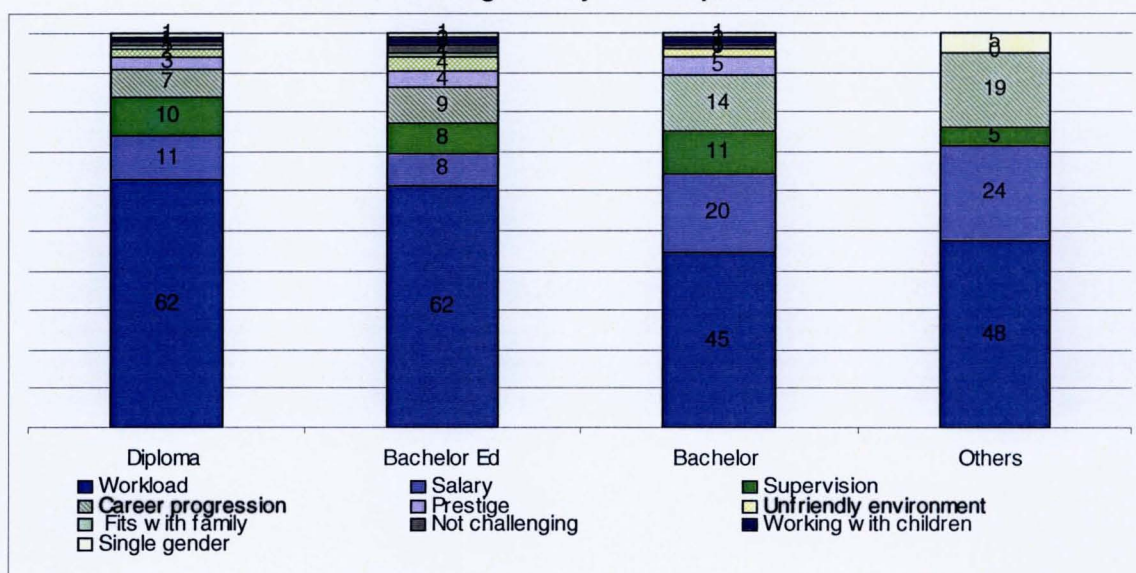


**Table 18C: The first negative: by nationality %\*\***



Considering the injustice of the discrimination between Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, a slightly different emphasis was expected in the non-Kuwaiti responses. The main discriminations suffered by non-Kuwaiti teachers are lower wages and less career progression, yet these come second and third. The workload is the main disadvantage from both sides, though it is more of a complaint for Kuwaitis (61%) than non-Kuwaitis (48%). However, only 9% of Kuwaitis choose salary as their main complaint, compared to 20% of non-Kuwaitis. Also twice the percentages of Kuwaitis (11%) as of non-Kuwaitis (5%) chose lack of autonomy as their main problem.

**Table 18E: The first negative: by teacher qualification %\*\***

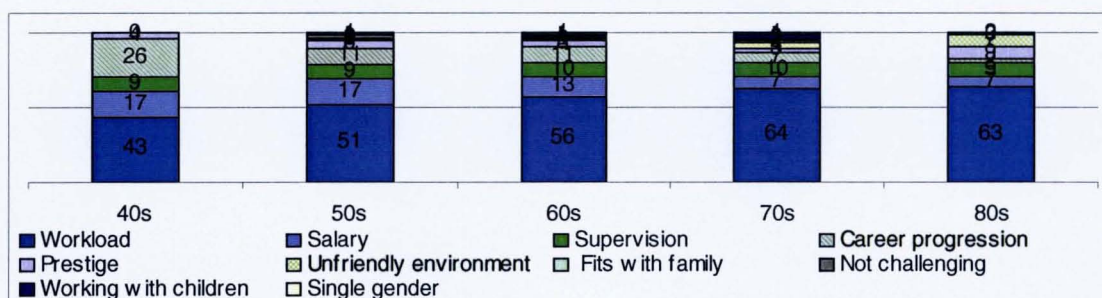


'Workload' is again the main issue for all levels of qualification, but less so for those with specialist bachelor or masters degrees. The data could suggest, just as for the higher school levels, that the higher the teachers' qualifications the less bothered they are about their workload, yet still bothered! Also, it seems that the higher their qualifications the more likely they are to see both their salaries and their opportunities



for career progression as inadequate. Higher qualifications come with an increase in dissatisfaction.

**Table 18E: The first negative: by age/generation %\***



Again, workload dominates the concerns for all generations, but the main point to draw from table 18E is how it steadily *decreases* as a concern the older the respondents. The explanation could well be the fact that experienced teachers tend to have less working hours.

### 3. Teachers' Perceptions of teacher education

The public and the school-leavers' views regarding the teacher education institutions have been established. Both have low perceptions of these colleges, particularly of the College of Basic Education. This survey attempts to find the teachers' own views of their institutions.

**Table 19: Summary of teachers' perceptions of teacher education %**

Teachers' perceptions of teacher education	Agree (sub-total)	Hesitant	Disagree (sub-total)	Mean (1-5)	Std. Deviation
Teacher education colleges have little prestige in Kuwait	47	20	33	3.2	1.2
Teacher education colleges are the last option for academically able students	62	15	23	3.6	1.2
Teacher College of Basic Education has high status	35	23	42	2.9	1.7
Education College has high status	46	23	31	3.2	1
Academically able students are likely to enter the College of Basic Education	22	18	61	2.5	1
Academically able students are likely to enter the Education College.	32	20	48	2.8	1.1

The figures and means in table 19 are clear. Half to two-thirds of teachers view the College of Basic Education as not having high status; a substantially smaller proportion of teachers, but still over a third, view the Education College as not having a high status. Neither college, but particularly the College of Basic Education, is perceived as likely to attract academically able students. Indeed, almost two thirds



think these colleges would be the last option of such students. The school-leavers survey did indeed show that very few 'A' and 'B' students would consider teaching as a career; so in those respects the teachers' perceptions would seem to be correct.

Now the variable effects for these questions will be examined.

**Table 20: Teacher education colleges have little prestige in Kuwait? %**

Teacher education colleges have little prestige in Kuwait		Certainly True	True	Sub total	Don't Know	Sub total	False	Certainly False	Mean	Std.
Nationality**	Kuwaitis	13	38	51	15	34	26	8	3.2	1.1
	Non-Kuwaitis	10	28	38	32	31	24	7	3.1	1.1
Qualification**	Diploma	6	31	37	19	43	36	7	3.0	1.2
	Bachelor Ed	12	38	50	17	33	25	8	3.2	1.2
	Bachelor	14	30	44	26	30	22	8	3.2	1.2
	Others	13	30	43	35	21	17	4	2.9	1.0
Total		12	35	47	20	33	25	7	3.2	1.1

Though a third of the teachers' responses 'defend' the standing of the Colleges, the general tendency is more towards the negative. Non-Kuwaitis are more likely to belong to the one-fifth who are unsure of their status – which is to be expected, since they have little or no personal experience of the colleges. And it is interesting to note that those who have a higher status qualification have lower opinions than others about teacher education.

**Table 21: The teacher education colleges are the last option for academically able students? %**

The teacher education colleges is the last option for academically able students		Certainly True	True	Sub total	Don't Know	Sub total	False	Certainly False	Mean	Std.
Gender**	Male	31	37	68	14	19	10	9	3.5	1.2
	Female	22	34	56	17	27	20	7	3.6	1.2
Social group**	Urban	32	35	67	12	21	13	8	3.6	1.2
	Semi	31	35	66	15	19	11	8	3.4	1.2
	Suburban	16	37	53	18	28	21	7	3.8	1.2
Totals		26	36	62	15	23	15	8	3.6	1.2

Overall, almost two thirds of teachers agree with the strong statement that teacher education is the last option for academically able students, and fewer than a quarter disagree with this. There is a good match between the overall views of teachers and of school-leavers on this question.

Significant differences occur for gender and social grouping. Females and suburbans are most likely to be against the statement, that is, to defend the colleges. As observed in the school-leaver survey, the small number of academically able students among those who were planning to enter teaching were almost exclusively



suburban girls. It is likely that this pattern also exists to some extent among teachers and that these teachers (and their associates) would defend themselves by defending the Colleges.

**Table 22: The College of Basic Education Kuwait has high status? %**

College of Basic Education Kuwait has high status		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender **	Male	4	25	29	27	44	36	8	2.8	1.0
	Female	8	33	41	20	39	31	8	3.0	2.0
Social group**	Urban	3	27	30	25	45	36	9	2.9	2.5
	Semi	3	29	32	26	42	35	7	2.9	1.0
	Suburban	12	32	44	19	38	29	9	3.1	1.2
Nationalities**	Kuwaitis	6	28	34	19	46	36	10	2.9	1.9
	Non-Kuwaitis	5	31	36	33	31	27	4	3.1	1.0
School level**	Primary	8	34	42	17	41	33	8	3.0	1.1
	Intermediate	5	27	32	26	42	35	7	2.9	1.0
	Secondary	5	25	30	30	41	32	9	2.9	2.5
Total		6	29	35	23	41	33	8	2.9	1.7

**Table 23: The Education College has high status? %**

The Education College has high status		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender **	Male	5	31	36	26	38	32	6	3.0	1.0
	Female	12	43	55	20	26	22	4	3.4	1.1
Social group**	Urban	4	40	44	23	33	28	5	3.0	1.0
	Semi	6	32	38	29	33	30	3	3.0	1.0
	Suburban	16	41	57	17	27	22	5	3.4	1.1
Nationalities**	Kuwaitis	10	38	48	19	32	27	5	3.2	1.1
	Non-Kuwaitis	6	36	42	31	26	24	2	3.2	1.0
School level**	Primary	10	45	55	18	26	23	3	3.4	1.0
	Intermediate	7	37	44	25	31	26	5	3.2	1.0
	Secondary	8	29	37	27	37	32	5	3.0	1.1
Qualification **	Diploma	4	37	41	29	31	27	4	3.1	1.0
	Bachelor Ed	11	40	51	20	29	25	4	3.3	1.0
	Bachelor	4	34	38	25	37	31	6	3.0	1.0
	Others	14	57	71	14	14	14	0	3.2	1.1
Total		9	38	47	23	31	26	5	3.2	1.0

Looking at tables 21 and 22 together, some *minor* variable effects can be noted first, before passing on to the more important ones. Non-Kuwaitis, again, register the highest proportions of 'hesitant' views – which is predictable considering that to some extent they stand outside the system. The Standard Deviation is high for urban teachers, secondary teachers and mid-career teachers considering the status of the Basic Education Colleges, indicating absence of internal consensus in these groups on this question. And those with Bachelor degrees and 'other' qualifications are more likely to attribute high status to Education College than others (including those who graduated from the College).

The *more important* variations are the large gender, social group and school-level effects. Females are much more likely than males to attribute high status to both colleges. The difference is larger for the Education College, to which indeed more



than half of women teachers attribute high status (55% of women, compared to just 36% of men). Similarly, suburban teachers are more likely than others to attribute high status to the colleges and, again, more than half of them attribute high status to the Education College (57% of suburban, compared to 44% of urban and 38% of mixed). Thirdly, primary teachers attribute more status to both colleges than intermediate teachers and intermediate teachers more than secondary teachers – and, again, a majority of primary teachers think the Education College has high status (55% of primary teachers, compared to 44% of intermediate teachers and just 27% of secondary teachers - though it is the latter who are most likely to have graduated from the Education College). It can be observed that in all three cases, it is the arguably ‘humbler’ or lower-status sections (women teachers, suburban teachers and primary teachers) that are most likely to attribute high status to the colleges.

**Table 24: Academically able students are likely to enter the College of Basic Education? %**

Academically able students most likely to enter the College of Basic Education %		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender **	Male	2	11	13	17	70	53	17	2.3	1.0
	Female	6	22	28	18	54	44	10	2.7	1.1
Social group**	Urban	2	12	14	16	69	55	14	2.3	1.0
	Semi	3	15	18	21	61	46	15	2.4	1.0
	Suburban	8	22	30	15	55	44	11	2.7	1.1
	Primary	5	23	28	18	54	44	10	2.7	1.1
School level**	Intermediate	3	12	15	19	65	51	14	2.4	1.0
	Secondary	4	12	16	16	68	51	17	2.4	1.0
Total		4	17	21	18	61	48	13	2.5	1.0

The 61% of teachers who do not believe that this college attracts academically able students, include significantly higher proportions of male teachers (70%), urban teachers (69%), and secondary teachers (68%). Again, it is the females, suburbans and primary teachers who are most likely to boost the minority of teachers who believe this College does attract able students.

**Table 25: Academically able students are likely to enter the Education College? %**

Academically able students most likely to enter the Education College %		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	H	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender **	Male	3	19	22	21	57	45	12	2.6	1.0
	Female	6	35	41	18	41	36	5	3.0	1.1
Social group**	Urban	2	24	26	19	55	47	8	2.6	1.0
	Semi	3	24	27	22	52	42	10	2.7	1.0
	Suburban	8	35	43	18	39	33	6	3.0	1.1
	Primary	6	35	41	18	40	35	5	3.0	1.1
School level**	Intermediate	4	24	28	23	49	39	10	2.7	1.1
	Secondary	3	21	24	18	58	47	11	2.6	1.0
Total		5	28	33	20	48	40	8	2.8	1.1



There is around a 10% increase in the positive responses when teachers are asked about able students entering the Education College (although the negative responses (48%) still outnumber the positive ones (33%)). However, the main pattern of variable effects is similar. As for the previous College, males, urbans and secondary teachers are substantially less likely to see the Education College as attracting academically able students. By margins that vary from 17-19%, female teachers, suburban teachers and primary teachers are more likely than others to see this College attracting able students<sup>9</sup>

So far, the findings show overall negative responses on the subject of teacher education colleges, though more positive on the whole than the school-leavers' responses. The responses are more strongly negative for the quality of those who enter teacher education than they are for the status of the Colleges. Female, suburban and primary teachers are substantially less likely to be negative.

In an attempt to identify some 'areas for improvement' that could contribute to the status of teacher education, three questions were designed to explore teachers' perceptions of the curriculum of these colleges.

**Table 26: Views on the curricula of teacher education**

<b>The curricula in teacher education colleges are</b>	<b>Certainly True</b>	<b>True</b>	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>False</b>	<b>Certainly False</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.</b>
Adequate.	2	18	20	31	48	35	13	2.6	1.0
Challenging.	2	13	15	29	56	42	14	2.5	1.0
Adopting new technologies.	5	30	35	30	35	27	8	3.0	1.1

The proportions who 'don't know' are high. This was predictable, since many teachers have had no experience of either College and many others no recent engagement with them – though such teachers might often have opinions based on hearsay or, perhaps, on their own observations of colleagues who are graduates of the Colleges.

Those with definite opinions split down the middle on the question of new teaching technologies being introduced to teacher education. It is important to note here that the term 'technology' would be understood in Kuwaiti schools simply as audio and visual aids. One would have hoped for greater confidence that this the use of such fairly basic aids did now figure in teacher training.

<sup>9</sup> There is also a qualification effect - which is difficult to fit into any pattern.



Opinion was definitely negative on the other two questions. The 20% of teachers who view the curriculum of the colleges as adequate were outnumbered more than 2:1 by the 48% who definitely did not think it adequate. Again, the 15% who are able to view it as challenging are outnumbered almost 4:1 by the 56% who do not think it challenging. These perceptions of teachers themselves are probably conveyed to the public and influence their views. More important, they suggest an actual crisis in teacher confidence in teacher education.

In all three of the questions, the only variable effects are for nationality and qualification.

**Table 26A: Views of the curricula of teacher education: Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis**

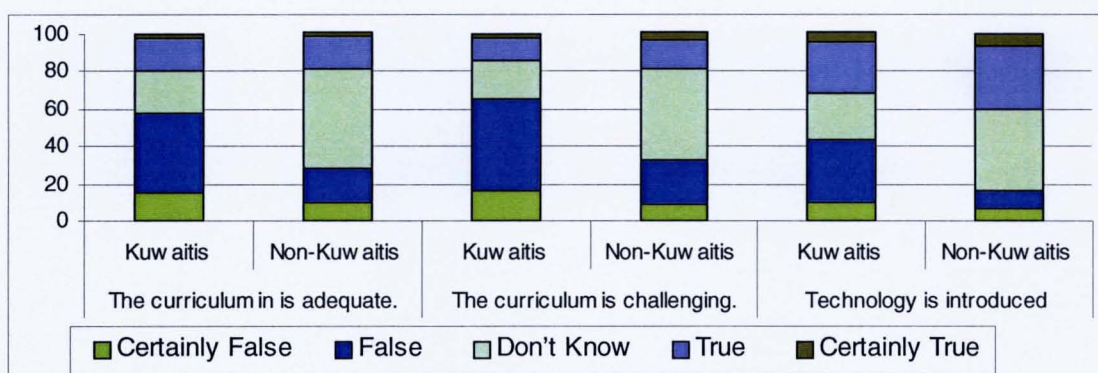


Table 26A confirms that the non-Kuwaitis who did not qualify in Kuwait are much more likely to be among the 'don't knows' in all three questions. It also reveals them as somewhat more optimistic than Kuwaitis about the state of teacher education in Kuwait.

**Table 26B: Views of the curriculum of teacher education: by qualifications**

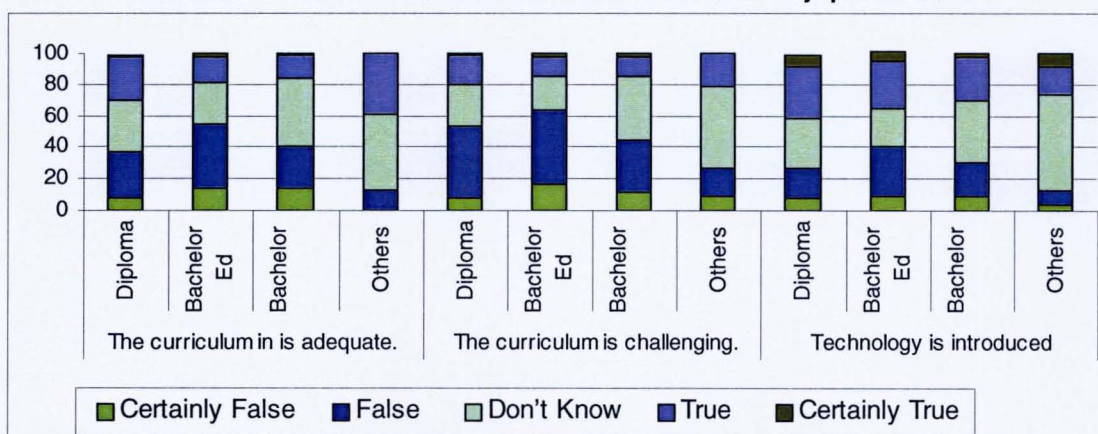


Table 26B shows that those with bachelor in education degrees are the ones with the most negative views. It seems that teachers who are actually qualified from these



colleges, the ones who are most likely to be aware of the colleges' curricula, have the most negative views. (Predictably, they are also the least likely to be hesitant.)

To conclude, the teachers' views on the status of the teacher education institutions are slightly less negative than their views on their own status – and also less negative than the views of the school-leavers on these institutions. Of course, the College of Basic Education (primary teachers programme) is perceived to have lower status than the Education College (secondary teachers programme), a distinction that could be related to the difference in status of primary and secondary teaching.

Teachers have rather stronger and more united views of the curricula of the two institutions (though with a lot indicating uncertainty). The majority are not content with these curricula, finding them inadequate and unchallenging, and they do not consider the Colleges to be places for academically able students.

#### 4. Developing the status of teaching

It has been seen that teachers' views on their own status are consistently negative on average, but how do teachers see this negative status impacting on recruitment to the profession? How do they see the relationship between status and recruitment?

**Table 28: Can higher status attract people to enter the profession? %**

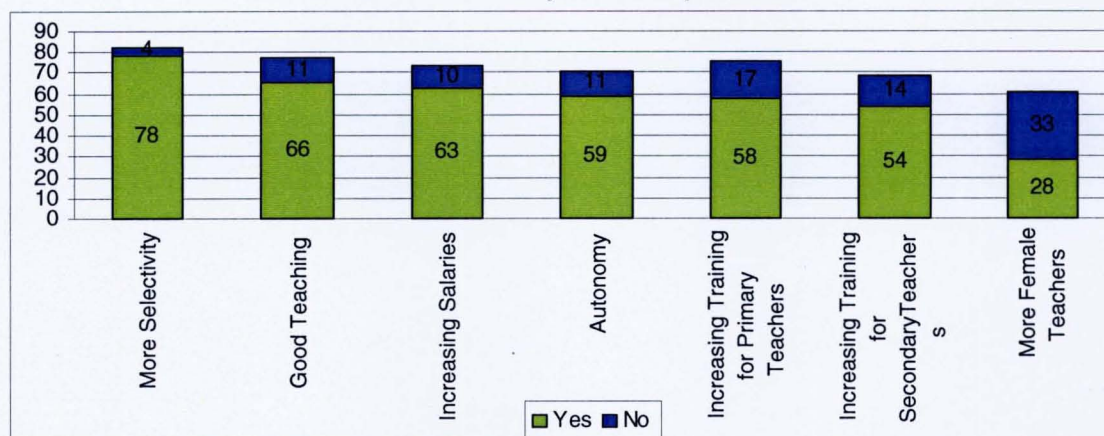
Higher status can attract people to enter the profession		Strongly agree	Agree	Sub total	Hesitant	Sub total	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Std.
Gender**	Male	3	24	27	19	54	41	13	2.6	1.0
	Female	7	30	37	20	43	34	9	2.9	1.1
Social group**	Urban	3	28	31	19	49	39	10	2.7	1.0
	Semi	5	21	26	23	52	39	13	2.6	1.0
	Suburban	9	34	43	17	39	31	8	3.0	1.2
Total		6	28	34	20	46	36	10	2.8	1.1

It is perhaps surprising that only a third of the teachers thought higher status could attract people to join the profession, and that almost half were definite in rejecting this. Males and, to a small extent, urbans were more likely to reject it, which is also surprising considering the earlier findings that males and urbans have lower perceptions of their status. Perhaps it would have been better to focus the question more specifically on the 'quality' issue: can higher status attract *more able* people to the profession? If this set of responses was the only evidence, it should have to be admitted that teachers did not seem to strongly associate their status with questions of recruitment. However, there are two further sets of responses to consider.



In the first of these questions,<sup>10</sup> teachers were asked to accept or reject items on a given list as likely or not to improve the status of teachers. Table 29 shows only the definite *yes* and *no* answers, omitting the many 'maybe' and 'don't know' responses.

**Table 29: views on ways to develop the status**



Across the seven items, more selectivity at entry to the profession attracts the largest consensus – the most acceptances and the least rejections. This level of support for raising entry levels suggests very strongly that teachers do see current entry levels as too low and as affecting their status negatively. Teachers give their second highest level of support to 'good teaching', which in this context means 'better' or 'improved' teaching.

It can be said that both of these most popular proposals are linked to teacher education. The proposals *to increase* training for teachers' items also attracted majority support, but these were much smaller majorities and smaller than had been expected. It is possible that some teachers may have exaggerated the involvement of the Ministry of Education in the survey and feared that voting for more training could be implemented and applied to them. There was sometimes more enthusiasm for additional training for teachers of another level; so half of primary teachers, but only 10% of intermediate and secondary teachers, are unsure if additional primary training is a way to improve teacher status. (For a table of the variable effects, see appendix I, Tables 29A and 29B<sup>11</sup>).

<sup>10</sup> It may be worth noting that while questions in this survey generally referred the respondents to 'teachers' as to a third party, these two questions addressed them more personally and directly.

<sup>11</sup> An interesting gender difference is that male teachers, on average, support a greater number of the proposals than the female teachers. Reading and collating the returns, one got an impression that the male teachers seem to be more concerned about their status than female teachers.



There was good majority support for increased salaries and increased autonomy, which fits with earlier findings regarding the 'main disadvantages' that teachers perceived in teaching. Male teachers believe more than females that increasing the salary will improve teachers' status; in a traditional society, salary can be more of a male issue. Teacher autonomy was a larger concern for secondary teachers than for others.

Having more female teachers was the only proposal not to attract majority support. Many professed uncertainty over it and those who had a view divided more or less equally. More women than men supported the idea, but women generally were not much enthusiastic about it. This finding suggests that this approach (especially with a relatively good gender balance in the profession, compared to other countries) should not be a high priority in a programme to enhance teacher status.

A final open question invited teachers to offer their further thoughts on improving teacher status. Their answers, which were frequently substantial, were analysed as revolving around the following ten themes.

**Table 30: The responses to the open question<sup>12</sup>**

<b>Teachers thoughts on ways to develop the status</b>	<b>%</b>
Increase salary	35
Teachers' autonomy	22
Reducing teachers work load	19
Teachers must respect their profession to get others to respect it	15
Parents should respect teachers more	13
Students do not respect teachers. That must change	9
Media should be involved to enhance the teacher image.	8
Enhance the curriculum	6
Regular courses and training for teachers	5
Teacher education must improve its standard	1

The moral aspects of status played some part in these suggestions, particularly in the quite widespread perceptions of a lack of respect for teachers from students and/or parents and/or teachers themselves. (it has been found earlier that 68% of the public thought Kuwaitis did respect teachers. Perhaps it needs a higher percentage to remove all reasonable doubts.)

Many took the opportunity to return again to the themes of higher salary and more autonomy. Here, some respondents may have had an exaggerated idea of the

<sup>12</sup> Teachers in this open question may have pointed out more than one way to improve the status, therefore the total no. of percentage is more than a 100%.



survey's influence on the Ministry. Enhancing school curricula in schools and getting the media more involved on teachers' side were addressed by some.

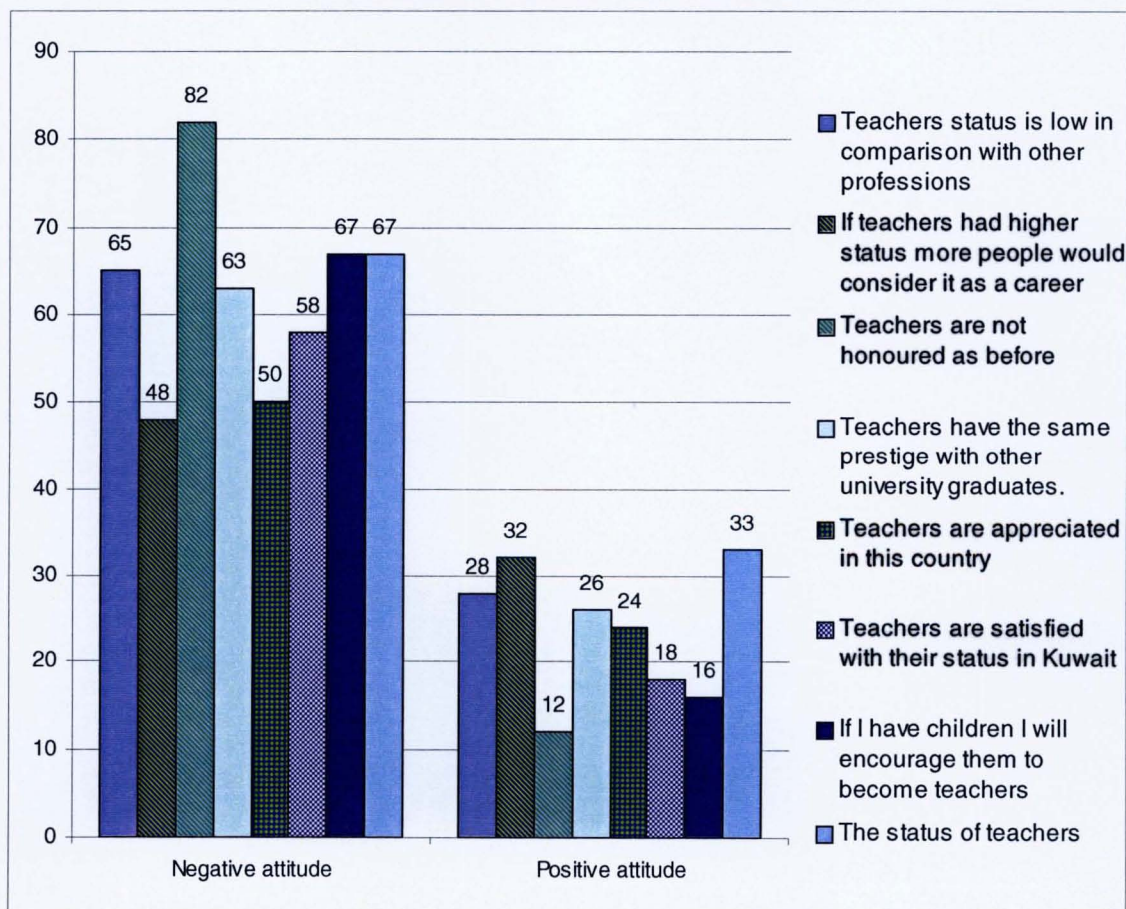
As can be seen from table 30, only small numbers chose to return to teacher education themes in their open responses. However, the most important of the findings from these questions remains the exceptionally large support from teachers for the ideas that a more selective entry and better teaching practices are two keys to raising teacher status.

### **Part Three: Further Analyses**

In this section, having first explored one set of findings further by correlating and combining items of the questionnaire, some comparative studies shall be looked at.

The eight items on the next table together provide a general picture of teachers' views of their status. (The undecided or hesitant responses are omitted and only the definitely negative and positive responses are represented in the interests of creating a clear picture.) .

**Table 31: Teachers attitude on their status**



In this statistical exercise on teachers' perceptions of their status, the key words are: status, image, honour, satisfaction, and encouragement. The purpose of the exercise, and of Table 31, is to line up *together* 'the negatives' in relation to teacher status, and similarly 'the positives', so that an overall impression can be gained and an overall comparison made. At a glance 'the negatives' vary from 84% on the topic of declining honour to 48% on low status affecting recruitment, while 'the positives' fall to 12% and rise to 33% correspondingly.<sup>13</sup> Also for all eight questions, teachers' negative responses are twice or three times the numbers of positive responses.

### *Comparative studies*

Some studies regarding the attractions and the drawbacks of teaching in the UK and in the U.S. are firmly related to my discussion in regard to teaching in Kuwait.

The National Education Association (NEA) has produced a report (2003) on the status of the American public school teacher every five years since 1961, providing a chronicle of the teaching profession over four decades. The survey has identified the reasons for teachers not intending to teach until retirement. The largest segment of those teachers, 37%, cited low salaries. Minority teachers (50%), male teachers (43%), and teachers under 30 (47%) were the most likely to claim low pay as the reason why they would not stay in teaching.<sup>14</sup> The report also reveals a profession that is struggling to provide role models for both genders and for all ethnic groups within a teaching profession that is predominantly white (90%), and female (79%).<sup>15</sup> It seems that in the U.S. feminisation and imbalance in terms of social or ethnic groups are common features of the teaching profession. In Kuwait, though a better gender balance is maintained, social group imbalance may be having a negative impact on the teaching profession.

However, the main difference is the strong sense of vocation and love for their job that US teachers seem to have, regardless of complaints about their salaries. The NEA survey shows that America's public school teachers spend much of their own time expanding their knowledge and skills, and their own money purchasing classroom supplies and materials for their students. And in spite of the long hours

---

<sup>13</sup> The status of teachers scale on 1 to 10 is divided in half (positive 1-5/negative 6-10).

<sup>14</sup> NEA Research, August 2003, *American Public School Teacher 2000-2001*, National Education Association, Great Public School for Every Child, Washington, D.C.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*



and low pay that may induce them to leave teaching before retirement, a majority would return to the classroom if they had it all to do again.<sup>16</sup>

In another continent, a paper by Alan Smithers and Pamela Robinson (Centre for Education and Employment, 2001) reported a national survey in England and Wales of teachers' resignations, which suggested that 70,500 teachers in total (full time and part time) left their school during the year.<sup>17</sup> The reason behind their resignations were explored through 102 interviews with a sample of teachers leaving teaching. Eighty-five per cent of these reasons were expressed negatively for teaching. However, during the interview the leavers were asked to name three things that could be done to bring them back into teaching. A fifth said nothing would tempt them back. The rest indicated different improvements they would be looking for, of which the most popular one was reduced workload. The interviewees were also asked the reason they became teachers. The results showed that both primary and secondary teachers had entered teaching with a strong sense of vocation (see appendix I, Tables 32, 32A, and 32B). The two *most* frequently mentioned factors were: 'working with children/people', and 'love of subject'. And the two factors *least* frequently mentioned were 'holidays' and 'fits with family life'.

Comparing these reasons with those revealed in this study is to compare opposites. Teachers in Kuwait are attracted to the profession for poles-apart reasons. There is no comparable sense of vocation in choosing teaching. They seem much more 'practical' in their career choices, aiming for comfort and money mainly. However, it seems that in both countries teachers are repulsed from the profession for similar reasons, especially workload – which is the main complaint in both studies – though it must then be added that the workloads in question are altogether different.

A more substantial similarity may be that in both countries teachers' perceive their own professional status as unsatisfactory. In England, a teacher survey in 2003 by the General Teaching Council (GTC) and the Guardian Newspaper found that 65% of the teachers surveyed believed that the public did not have much respect for the profession, which is similar to the proportion of Kuwaiti teachers who see themselves as lower in status than other graduate professions.

---

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Smithers, A. and Robinson, P., 2001, *Teachers leaving*, London: NUT; Liverpool: CEER, University of Liverpool. The statistics for turnover among new teachers in England are startling; 20 percent of all new recruits leave the classroom within three years. In urban districts, the numbers are worse: close to 50 percent of newcomers flee the profession during their first five years of teaching

In England, a survey by the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) in 2001 asked over 1000 adults how much status did they think certain named professions had in the society. Teachers came second after the medical profession, which demonstrates that English society values its teachers. One could say that in both societies the public's perception of teachers' status is higher than teachers' own perceptions, though the Kuwaiti public would not go as high as the English public.

Some studies of elements that can contribute to teachers' status will now be discussed. In the USA, Henke and Zann (2001) carried out a longitudinal four-year study of occupational stability on behalf of the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).<sup>18</sup> It showed that 79% of graduate teachers in 1994 believed that their teaching job both required a bachelor's degree and had good career potential. A similar proportion of full time engineers, scientists, and research assistants perceived their jobs as having the same professional features, but graduates who worked full time in all other occupation categories were less likely to share that perception. In 1997, this study also showed, the proportion of graduate teachers who perceived their jobs in this positive way remained at 78%. However, the key point in this study was *the stability* of the professionals who saw their jobs in this way. Among those who perceived their occupations as requiring a degree and having career potential in 1994, just 32% were working in a different occupation in 1997, in contrast to 71% of those who had not seen their profession in this way.

The findings of this longitudinal study reveal the impact of teachers' perceptions of their status on their satisfaction with their profession. Those who believe that teaching requires special knowledge and has a potential career progress (in other words, think highly of their profession), are the ones who are content, therefore they stay. In Kuwait one-third of teachers do not believe that teaching require special skills and expertise, and many do not seem to think highly of their profession, therefore they are not content. They may not change their career, but they are likely to stay unsatisfied and thus be less productive.<sup>19</sup>

Another survey of the American public school teachers shows that the average teacher has 15 years of classroom experience, and more than half (56%) hold a

---

<sup>18</sup> Robin, R. Henke, Zahn, L. ,2001, *Attrition of new teachers among recent College graduates*, National Center for Education Statistics. U.S. Department of Education,Office of Educational Research and Improvement NCES 2001-189.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

masters degree or a 6-year diploma. More than three-quarters participate in system-sponsored professional development activities during the school year; more than 35% participate in such activities during the summer. In Kuwait, teachers who have masters degrees tend not to stay in the profession; those who stay with this qualification are the non-Kuwaitis. Moreover, the professional development activities for teachers are limited and this lack seems to be compensated by intense supervision, that teachers seem to resent. Teachers are controlled in their methods of teaching by government-produced teacher guides that instruct teachers on what to do and how to teach each lesson. As shown in this study, prestige is related to esoteric knowledge and authority, thus lacking these elements does affect the status of the profession.

In Kuwait, the UK, and the U.S. teachers' workload is the profession's main cause of complaint. The difference is that teachers in the U.S, for example, spend an average of 50 hours per week on instructional duties, including an average of 12 hours each week on non-compensated school-related activities such as grading papers and bus duty. In Kuwait the average of working hours per week is 12 hours. Teachers' workload if is seen as a disadvantage that could affect the number of people entering the profession, but it would not affect the *status* of the profession, since most prestigious professions are known to work more hours per week.

### **Summary**

Teachers have slightly lower opinions of their status even than school-leavers and, certainly, lower than the public opinion. On a scale of 1-10, on average they estimate their own status in comparison with other graduate professions as 4.6. They think teaching is lower status than other professions, that teachers lack the prestige of other graduates, are bothered by their image and are not satisfied with their status, and they would definitely not encourage their own children to follow them into teaching. These views are held by majorities of approximately two-to-one in each case, but larger for male teachers, teachers in urban schools, teachers in intermediate and secondary schools and teachers in mid-career. Most see primary teachers as having less status than others. More than 80% see teacher status as declining. There is a clear sense of dissatisfaction in the teachers' replies to these questions, which can be summed up in the statement that teachers as a whole see their own status as medium but inclining to low.



Nearly all teachers perceive teaching as requiring at least some special skills and expertise, but a third would add 'not much' and it seems that a similar proportion at least finds teaching uninteresting. Salary and holidays are seen as the hugely dominant main reasons for choosing teaching. The altruistic and 'vocational' elements of their profession are not at all prominent in the motivations they suggest for choosing teaching, particularly when compared with what studies reveal about teachers in some other countries. Eighty per cent see their workload as a problem, though considering their working-hours it is 'a problem' that teachers in most other countries would like to have. A common complaint, especially among intermediate and secondary teachers, of too little autonomy may have a stronger basis. These findings raise questions both about the teaching approaches actually employed, and about the satisfaction or happiness levels of Kuwaiti teachers, though these questions are beyond the scope of this study.

Teachers, especially female, suburban and primary teachers, view the status of the two teachers' institutions more optimistically than the school-leavers. They perceive the College of Basic Education as having lower status than the Education College, a view that may link interactively with their view of primary teaching as being accorded less status than teaching at other levels. By contrast with their mainly moderate views of the *status* of the two teacher-training Colleges, they do not think that they are places for academically able students and they see their current *curricula* as inadequate and unchallenging. Such responses seem to imply that the teachers lack confidence in current teacher education.

If it is true that teachers are acknowledged less than other university-qualified professionals and their contributions to society undervalued, who is to blame? Teachers do see their profession as more honourable than prestigious, but it cannot help their status if they do not value much the altruistic and intrinsic aspects of their job. Also, much has been said about the need to nationalise the system, but how can Kuwait attract people of the right quality? It was important to find that teachers themselves gave exceptionally large support to the ideas that more selectivity at entry to teaching and better teaching practices are keys to raising teacher status.

## Chapter seven: Case Study

In the first fieldwork phase the public's, school leavers' and teachers' perceptions of teachers in Kuwait have been identified. It has been established that the status of teachers, overall, is perceived as 'medium', ranging from a higher medium in the public survey to a lower medium in the school-leavers' and teachers' surveys. It was also established that many teachers and school leavers consider this 'low medium' status as a main disadvantage of the profession. This mediocre status has a particularly negative impact on urbans and, crucially, on academically able students; it is likely to be one reason why they are the most reluctant to enter the profession.

The status of teacher education institutions was also evidenced to be low, even lower than the status of teachers. In this chapter I endeavor to locate a possible association, and if it exists, its extent, between the status of teachers and the status of teacher education. A case study was conducted in the College of Basic Education. It explores the type of students entering the college, the students' views of the college, their views of teaching as a profession, and their views of teachers' status. It includes a survey of the student teachers but, seeking to provide some 'thicker' description and deeper understanding of the climate and the culture of the college, and how those can affect its status, it complements this survey with a range of qualitative methods. This first section of the chapter will be a description of the College of Basic Education, and will include general impressions based on my observation of it.

Of the two teacher education institutions, the College of Basic Education was chosen for study for a number of reasons. First, it has lower status than the Education College, as our earlier surveys have shown; hence it offers a chance of clearer and more explicit observations about status as a problem. Secondly, more than 92% of primary teachers are Kuwaitis, compared to only 48% of secondary teachers (the majority of secondary teachers have not been trained in Kuwait<sup>1</sup>). Therefore, the impact of the College of Basic Education on the status of teachers could be assumed to be higher than that of the Education College. Thirdly, as I have mentioned in earlier chapters, I myself have graduated from the College of Basic Education. It made sense to do my case study there, since I am familiar with its culture and have good access to it. Also, the ten-year interval since I graduated gave me some

---

<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, 2006, *The statistic dairy, 2005/2006 Kuwait*, Planning Department, Environmental Changes Follow- UP Supervision.

'distance' from it. To some extent I could combine the advantages of the 'insider' and the 'outsider'.

First, several main facts about this college should be recalled. It is part of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training. It offers primary teacher training only. It is a gender-divided institution that has separate campuses for male and female students, but a single faculty. There are around 6000 students on roll, taught by a faculty of 492 lecturers, and the course lasts four years. The college objectives are stated as to prepare the skilled national cadre needed to teach in the primary sector, and to qualify these cadres in the various specialties needed by the Ministry of Education.<sup>2</sup>

As reported in chapter 3, the duration of the fieldwork was one month, May 2005. In addition to a questionnaire-based survey of students<sup>3</sup>, it included class observation; group interviews with students; interviews with lecturers; and some analyses of documents. However, the continuous relatively unstructured observation of the college was possibly the most significant of the qualitative research 'instruments'. 'Living in' the environment for a month, informally interacting with students and lecturers on a daily basis, was a leading source of information and perspective. Among other things, it permitted more accurate and deeper interpretations of the survey data.

As this chapter progresses, the analysis integrates data from all sources (but, for convenience, starting from the student questionnaire responses) under the following six themes: ***students' outlook; the curriculum; students' expectations of the teaching profession; perceptions of teachers' status; perceptions of the status of the teacher education institutions; students' proposals.***

First, however, I will draw on my observation notes for the first few days of the study to describe the impression of *the stance* of the college that a visitor is likely to take away, particularly from a walk around the women's campus.

Passing by the guard and entering into the grounds of the women's campus through the parking lot, it is immediately noticeable that the surroundings are

---

<sup>2</sup> Information and computer centre, PAAET. 2003. [online], Available: [http://www. Paaet.edu.kw](http://www.Paaet.edu.kw) / [11 June 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].

<sup>3</sup> The student-teachers' survey was part of the case study; however it also contributed to the objectives of the other three surveys, that is to identify the status of teachers in Kuwait.



not what one would expect from a Kuwaiti college. The buildings are somewhat humble and simple in design, very much like those of a school. If it were not for the college sign on the external fence by the guard, it would be easy to pass by without recognition. The uncomplicated design of each campus consists of two adjacent square structures, each structure enclosing at its centre a well-maintained and pleasant garden. The buildings sit three floors high with open corridors that surround the gardens at the base and then overlook the gardens at the higher levels. [The buildings of the men's campus - a 10-minute drive away - are virtually identical.]

Passing along the corridors, the doors to the uniformed size classrooms follow you around the garden. The corridor walls are adorned with posters that point to the etiquette of being a Muslim and perhaps the only way to describe the serenity, traditionalism and moralistic atmosphere of the college would be to liken it to a convent. This is experienced to a much deeper degree in the woman's college as quiet-spoken figures, draped from head to toe in black, move lightly in twos or threes around the building. A sea of eyes that blend together to notice your presence, yet remain unknown to you. One or two women have their faces uncovered, and perhaps a third is content to wear the hijab and leave her face unveiled, but for the most part anonymity is maintained. This is an unusual situation: women attending the same classes but not striving to get to know each other, content to exchange polite conversation with those nearest to them.

It should be stressed that to an ordinary Kuwaiti, this is a non-ordinary display of traditional culture that has long since been left behind in most parts of the country. It is echoed in the yearly union college elections where despite there being three competing parties, it is the ultra-conservatives that consistently celebrate victory each year, which would be unusual in other educational institutions in Kuwait.

Entering the classrooms, chairs face the blackboards and there is seating for around thirty students all situated at ground level. Once filled, the classrooms contain masked audiences who are greeted by the lecturer and have their attendance marked. The lecture is based around the textbook and interaction between students and teacher is minimal, leaving the lecturer in a seemingly impersonal void. As the lecture begins a striking contrast fills the room whereby the nearly silent black room of eyes sit almost motionless to witness a lecture that is delivered with a passion and interest that brings the subject, and indeed the room, to life. One might have assumed that the combination of a very limited interaction between students and teacher, the anonymous audience, and a lecture style that is based around transmitting knowledge would disable the lecturer from any kind of dynamic delivery. Yet what actually transpires is precisely the opposite. The lecturers actually appear to perform like actors on a stage and it is only the presence of the audience rather than their personal participation that is needed to set the scene.



On leaving the classrooms and once again walking the corridors, this time alongside the lecturers' rooms where I can continue my fieldwork, I am struck by something else. In some offices one or two students are sat actually pleading with the teacher to change the marks on their work or to take absences into consideration. Such bargaining interactions are common.

I must now see behind the masks of the students, to ascertain their values, beliefs, and views about teaching, in other words, to find out who are those students.

### **1. Students' outlook**

I will start by investigating the distribution and range of the students in the college in terms of six variables for which data was gathered from the general information questions in the student questionnaire: gender, social group, marital status, age, specialism, and year of study. Then a set of responses that explicitly illustrate the mode and the attitude of the students will be analysed alongside material from the group interview, interviews and documents.

*The sample: who are training to become teachers?*

Copies of the 22-item questionnaire (appendix D) were issued to 160 students across both campuses. They were distributed in classes for core modules to ensure covering the diversity of students – handed to students, with the permission of the lecturers, in the last 15 minutes of the lectures. The return rate was 99 %.

Tables A-I in Appendix J show the distribution in terms of the selected variables. Gender was controlled in the sense that the questionnaires were distributed (almost) equally to both campuses. The students' social group was deduced mainly from where they live<sup>4</sup>. Only one fifth of the students are from the city (urbans), compared to nearly half from the suburbs, a ratio of approximately 3:7, which also suggests that the majority of those from the 'mixed areas' are probably Bedouin. This finding was predicted; its impact will be investigated later.

Normally in higher education institutions the year of study correlates closely with students' ages. However, because this college has many mature students I classified these variables independently. In Kuwait, 22 is the usual age for graduation but

---

<sup>4</sup> As has been argued in previous surveys, this was the most practical method in a small society where social group can be reliably located from neighbourhoods and surnames. However, there may be a small percentage of error.

\* The term 'conservative' is used here in the sense of old-fashioned and traditional.

\* The term 'liberal' is used here in the sense of open-minded and westernised.

\* The term 'religious' is used here in the sense of solidly believing in God and his directives.



almost half the sample are above this age. The students in this college are then noticeably older than the average for undergraduate students.

In Kuwait University, the majority of the students are single, and students who are married with children are rare. Yet in this college the data shows that 39% of the students are parents. That figure disguises two large contrasts: half of the female students compared to just a quarter of the male students, and nearly three-quarters of the suburban students compared to just 5% of those from the urban areas, are married with children.

There is a suburban/urban contrast in choice of specialism. Nearly half the suburban students major in a humanities subject (religious studies, Arabic, or social science), compared to only 14% of urban students. The latter major mainly in Music, PE, Art, and Interior Design, raising the question of whether their attendance was mainly due to the fact that most of these subjects are only available in this college.

The students of this college, then, are mainly suburban (Bedouin) in culture if not always in address, older than average student age, and very often parents. This mixture of students is not typical of higher education in Kuwait. It is distinctive of the culture of this college. But how do the students themselves view the culture of the college?

#### *Students' perceptions of their own outlook*

The questionnaire invited students to choose the best 'label' for the students of the College of Basic Education.

**Table 1**

Types of students %	Conservatives •	Liberals •	Poor	Wealthy	Religious •	Unintelligent	Intelligent	Diverse	Others	Total
	36	14	3	0	18	0	4	24	0	100%

Table 1 shows that more than a third chose 'conservative' as the best one-word description, a quarter chose 'diverse', and smaller but significant proportions chose 'religious' and 'liberal'. No one chose 'unintelligent', but only 4% chose 'intelligent'.



Urbans were more likely than suburbans to choose 'liberal' as the best description of their fellow students (an example of wishful thinking, perhaps!) and suburbans were more likely to choose 'conservative'. Females were more likely than males to choose 'conservative' and 'religious'. Single students were more likely than others to choose 'diverse' or 'liberal'. More than half the married students choose 'conservative'. Substantially more science students than humanities students chose 'liberal' – indeed they were almost as likely to choose 'liberal' as 'conservative'. Of the 11 sample students in the 28+ age-group, 5 chose 'poor' and were the only students to do so. (See appendix J for the relevant tables).

In the interviews, students and lecturers were also asked also to portray the students and in this more thoughtful context they tended to say, especially in the female campus, that there is a diversity of students in the college. However, when then asked to compare themselves with students of other colleges in Kuwait, their answers suggested that they saw themselves as being more conservative than others. Particularly in the female college, there is a strong sense of a religious and conservative ambiance, as almost all the women are wearing headscarves the 'hijab'. The 'hijab' is a sign of religion or of Bedouin traditions.

Male students were notably pointed and sarcastic in their comments, such as:

*'Just losers enter this college';*

*'I guess we have the university leftovers';*

*'We have smart students, not study-smart but socially smart'.*

Virtually all the male' answers had similar tendencies. Simply, they were not proud of the quality of students in their college. On the other hand, lecturers had different and more nuanced views, such as:

*'We have all kinds of students'.*

*'We have good ones and very, very bad ones'.*

In the group interviews, as in the questionnaire, mature students tended to describe the students of the college as poor. I believe that this supposition may be true. In a very small and extravagant society, it is easy to sense the wealth of other people. During my fieldwork, there was no sense of wealth amongst the students. Also, while searching for documents in the archives, I found that, many students claim benefits. (I am not sure if this is the case in Kuwait University, but I assume it is not.). Of course, it is important to note that 'poverty' is relative and differs from one country to another.

I have mentioned in Chapter One that when the College was first opened it basically enrolled anyone; students just had to complete their secondary education to be qualified to enroll. It seems to be widely believed that this is, more or less, still the case nowadays. Certainly, the college accepts many students who have been refused elsewhere. What would be the student view of this? The questionnaire asked if academically able students were likely to enter the college. Table 3 shows that half of the students do not expect able students to enter the college and that another quarter hesitate.

**Table 2**

<b>Academically able students likely to enter the College of Basic Education</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>Hesitant</b>	<b>Sub total</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Total</b>
	3	16	19	28	53	49	4	100%

Some effect is apparent for each of the six variables but only in the degree of negativity. Male students, urban students, and science majors had relatively lower expectations of the quality of students entering the college than females, suburbans and humanities students. Older age groups were the most negative. There is also a clear increase in negativity that goes together with marital and parental status. Single students are less negative than others, and parents are the most negative (see Table 2A in appendix J).

In the group interview I noticed that suburban females were the only ones with positive views about the academic abilities of the students in the college. One of them remarked 'I know many people in the college who were smart in high school'.

There was a disparity in views among the lecturers. Some believe that, as one put it, *'many students are academically able and chose teaching because it is a good profession.'* Others thought that 'poor academic abilities may be the case for men, but for women it is different.'

If not high grades, what did principally motivate the students to enter this college? The questionnaire invited students to choose from a menu of reasons that also included an 'others' option.

**Table 3**

<b>MAIN Reason to enter the college</b>	<b>Easy to get in</b>	<b>Suits my social situation</b>	<b>Love of children</b>	<b>Love of teaching</b>	<b>Gender-division</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
	35	11	1	9	32	12	100%

The table above makes it clear that most students do not have the love of children or of teaching as their main reason for entering the college. For two-thirds, or more, the acknowledged main reason to enroll is either low high school grades or traditional family pressure to enter a gender-divided college. For almost half the urban students it is the former. For almost half the suburban students it is the latter. (Appendix J, Table 3A) Bedouin families and religious families, as previously observed, prefer their children to attend a gender-divided college and, later, to go on to work in such an environment. In particular they are likely to prefer their daughters (or wives) to become teachers because schools are not mixed environments. So in group interviews, female students from the suburbs explained their motivation in terms like the following (selected here as elsewhere from among the clearest and most emphatic responses, but still representative):

*'My husband wants me to become a teacher'.*

*'Teaching is the most suitable profession for a women'.*

*'Teaching is a perfect job for a woman: good working hours and suits family life'.*

Urban students referred to their low grades, explicitly or implicitly:

*'I got expelled from the university.....for low grades' (a male student)*

*'It's better than going for a diploma' (a female student)*

*'The college offers a bachelor degree, and also, teaching is a secure job' (a female student)*

A less expected finding in the questionnaire data was that no less than 58% of the humanities majors in the sample acknowledged gender-division as their main reason. In terms of subject specialism, I learnt from the group interviews that Music and PE majors (who are both mainly urban) are likely to have entered this college for the love of the subject. So a female student explained:

*'I am very athletic and I wanted to do something related to sports.'*

However, a similar explanation from a male student had a sting in the tail:

*'I love music...not teaching'.*

It is safe to say that love of teaching, like love of students, was little in evidence when the question focused on students' *main* motivations for entering the college. But students were also invited to answer a direct question regarding their feelings about teaching. The obvious reply from College of Education students should be 'yes'. (Since 'teaching practice' in Kuwait is confined to final-year students, this question



really addressed their feeling about 'the idea' of teaching.) Yet 20% of them replied 'no'!

**Table 4**

Variables	Like teaching	No	Yes	Total
Gender	Female	18	82	100%
	Male	22	78	100%
Age	17-22	24	76	100%
	22-27	18	82	100%
	28+	0	100	100%
Status	Single	24	76	100%
	Married	35	65	100%
	Married with child	9	91	100%
Social group	Urban	26	74	100%
	Suburb	19	81	100%
	Mixed	17	83	100%
Year of study	First	19	81	100%
	Second	14	86	100%
	Third	20	80	100%
	Fourth	27	73	100%
Speciality	Humanities	5	95	100%
	Others	28	72	100%
	Science	26	74	100%
Total		20	80	100%

Table 4 shows that Music PE, and Art majors ('others') are more likely to be negative about teaching (they may have chosen the College because it is the only institution in which these subjects can be studied). Similarly, married students who are not yet parents on the one hand, but urban students (who are much less likely to be married) on the other hand, are more likely to be negative.

No gender effect is apparent in the table, but the male and female group discussions did suggest a likelihood of substantial differences across the genders. Whereas many male students said they were not particularly interested in teaching, none of the female students indicated any lack of interest. Suburban females, in particular, sounded generally idealistic and engaged about the idea of teaching.

So far, it can be concluded that the students who attend the college are mainly conservatives with old-fashioned traditional backgrounds. They, mainly, have chosen the college either because it fits well with a conservative outlook regarding women, or because their grades were too low for more attractive options, or (in a smaller number of cases) because it is the only college offering art, music and PE. Furthermore, 20 % of the student-teachers do not like teaching!

## 2. The curriculum

In this section the students' and lecturers' perception of the curriculum of the college will be explored. First, here is a description of its general structure and themes.

The College operates under the credit hour system, which stipulates that the student has to complete 68 credits successfully in order to graduate. These credits are distributed as follows: 60 credits for general, specialized and practical studies, and 8 for in-school field training which takes place in the final year. The sixty curriculum credits are divided into what is known as the 40:60 structure: 40% of the time



devoted to 'subject matter' knowledge (primary teachers in Kuwait are subject specialists) and 60% for Education and Educational Psychology. In effect, then, the 68 course credits are distributed as 36 credits for core educational studies, 24 credits for subject knowledge in the student's specialist area, and 8 credits for teaching practicum.

The curriculum is based on the traditional paradigm of education for teachers in the weight it places on instructing the students in educational and psychological theories. The Education course covers child psychology, the psychology of learning, educational development, educational theories, curriculum studies, curriculum research, the philosophy of education, and teaching methods.

The College offers subject programs in the following specializations: Islamic Education - Arabic Language Science - Mathematics - Art Education - Physical Education and Sport - Librarianship and Educational - Technology - Music - Kindergarten - Home Economics - Interior Design - Electricity.

Lecturers usually choose one textbook for their students, but some prefer to hand out notes. *'We have the authority to choose which book to teach and how to teach it'*, one said. All that is expected from students is that they study the textbook or the notes. *'We make it as easy as possible for students'*, said another.

In the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate their overall views and feelings concerning the curriculum, again by selecting just one from a given set of options.

**Table 5**

The curriculum is	Challenging	Boring	Easy	Difficult	Progressive	Traditional	Total
	6	13	9	26	1	45	100%

Table 5 shows that out of six options, more than 70% chose as their best single descriptor either 'traditional' (which almost half of the students chose) or 'difficult' (which more than quarter chose). Females, humanities majors, and suburbans were more likely to choose 'difficult' (see appendix J, Table 5A). Small minorities chose 'boring' and 'easy'.

The group discussions would support the assumption that the label 'traditional' was mostly meant as a compliment. More generally, the students seemed pleased with the curriculum, as typified by the following remarks:

*'Nothing is wrong with the curriculum'* (female student)



*'I wish they would focus more on major subjects, but it is fine'* (male student)

The lecturers too, when I interviewed them, did not regard the curriculum as a matter of concern. They were inclined to support it; as one lecturer said: *'I think it's ok'*. This quotation represents the views of most of the lecturers interviewed.

Another question was designed to demonstrate specifically how difficult they consider the curriculum to be. It was added after piloting the questionnaire when it became obvious that it would usefully supplement the previous question.

**Table 6**

The curriculum is	Very easy	Easy	Not difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Mean
	0	3	37	53	8	3.7

Now it becomes clear that the majority of students, over 60%, find the curriculum difficult. Within the variables (Table 6A in appendix J), female students more than males experience it in this way. Also the older students, including 10 of the 11 students aged 28+ and 81% of the students who are parents, are more likely to experience it as difficult. Also, and significantly, a higher proportion of suburbans, which would fit with their having been more likely to enter the college mainly because of low grades.

Students in the group interviews came across as comparatively unsure in their views – perhaps seeking more nuance – on how difficult their curriculum was. They were changing their minds and giving different answers as they thought about it:

*'I think it is difficult.....not all the subject..... some are easy....I'm not sure'* (a female student)

*'Speciality subjects are easier than the others (core subjects)....but not all speciality subjects are easy'* (a female student)

*' mmmm.....difficult'* (a male student)

Difficulty is relative to ability and previous education. However, an inspection of the modules left the researcher with the view that the curriculum could hardly get any easier and still be at all fit for purpose. The level of Arabic language used in the textbooks is simple and straightforward. The books, generally, present theories as facts to be memorized. The dominant lecturers' conception of teaching are translated through their choice of textbooks: to transmit knowledge in simple forms with many subtitles and make no references to further readings. There is no place in the curriculum for conceptual change.



Continuing the investigation of the demands of the curriculum in relation both to the students' levels of academic competence and to their dedication, the questionnaire asked the students if they had repeated subjects during their years of study in the college.

Table 7

	Never	Yes, once	Yes, lots	Total
Repeated a module	59	22	18	100%

Forty per cent had repeated modules at least once. This included 50% of females and around 30% of males; around 70% of student parents, more suburban than urban students (despite the latter being more likely to cite poor school grades), and of course, higher proportions in the later years of study. PE, Music, and Art students, who, assumingly, are quite likely to be committed to their subjects, are less likely to have retaken modules. (Appendix J, Table 7A).

Overall, this could be considered an extremely disappointing result, at any rate if assumed that it was caused by the students' poor abilities or application, as opposed to module difficulty. In the group interviews, some students sought to explain these results by blaming repetition either on the curriculum or on family responsibilities.

*'The curriculum is difficult, especially the education subjects'* (male student)

*'Sometimes it's hard to study and take care of a family at the same time'*  
(female student)

Other students seemed hesitant about identifying the causes and did not comment on the findings. It seems that students at this college are not those distinguished for ability, ambition or achievement.

The doors of the lecturers' offices were a good source of information. Pinned there, among other documents, were usually lists of examination results by student name, whether for the final examination or one of the many other examinations during the course of study. In addition to spotting instantly that the majority of the surnames exhibit the students' suburban background, one can quickly get a strong sense of the profile of the students' academic abilities. There was always at least one failed student on each lecturer's door, also many Cs, but few As and Bs.

In the administration office, there are many documents that reveal the quality of the students. For example, I came across a list of 'FA' students that had plenty of names on it; it turned out that these were students who had failed due to lack of attendance. Another list was of those with a high grade point



average. They seemed numerous, but perhaps not numerous enough for a student population of 6000.

In regard to the teaching methods adopted in this college, my class observations, and interviews, indicate that 'lecturing' may be the only method of teaching in the college. Some lecturers blame this dominance on the size of the class, others blame the students, and some do not see any harm in lecturing as a teaching method. The following comments reflect how they attempt to modify this dominance at the edges:

*'We use projectors and we engage the students in discussions'.*

*'We leave time for students to ask any question'.*

*'At the end of each module I ask my student to present an essay'.*

*'We have the flexibility to teach however we want; we have to see what style fits best with the curriculum and with the students'.*

In general, lecturers seem satisfied with their teaching method.

Here, a description of a child development class I observed can illustrate overtly the teaching methods in the college.

In a class, the lecturer entered the room and greeted the students, and took the register. It was apparent that he did not know his students well.

The majority of students had their textbooks with them.

For fifty minutes the lecturer was solely giving information. The only resource that was used was the core textbook. The students listened quietly without taking notes, yet they did not seem bored. The lecturer was asking questions without expecting responses, as he was answering his own questions. He made three funny jokes and got choral-laughter responses from the students.

I could not identify the low achievers from the high achievers, and I assume, neither did the lecturer. It seemed that would be done only in the summative tests. In other words, 'differentiation' was not a feature of the teaching.

The lecturer's knowledge of the subject matter seemed to be thorough and deep, and his professional skills, in the sense of explanation and delivery, seem to be excellent.

At the end of the fifty minutes, the lecturer asked the students if they had understood the lecture and invited them to ask any questions. The student implied that they had understood and did not ask any question. The class was then dismissed.



I observed the same scenario in the two other class observations.

After my first class observation and some days of observation in the college, I was stirred to add two extra items to the questionnaire. Students were asked to count the times when they used a library and how many essays were required from them. Their responses are likely to reflect the pedagogical style.

Table 8

Used the library	Never	1-4 times	5-10 times	11+	Total
	39	41	19	1	100%

Deplorably, about 40% of the students never went to the library, and another 40% went only occasionally. The library is clearly not part of the teaching and learning culture of the College. An interesting finding is that the urban students tend to use it more than others. It may be expected that first-year students would use the library less than fourth-year students, since they did not attend as many modules. Regrettably, however, as many as 30% of students in the fourth-year never went to a library.

Students were asked in the group interviews if they used the Internet for information and study; almost none of them use it. Their reasons and comments included:

*'Our English is very bad'.* (Female student)

*'I was never asked to use it'.* (Male student)

*'There is 'Google' in Arabic, I use it sometimes, but not for studying purposes'.* (Male student)

There is a need to compare these surprising and disturbing findings with the situation in other universities or with the results of other studies.

In order to explore the College's curriculum and pedagogy further, students were asked to state the numbers of essays requested from them during their course of study.

Table 9

Essay required	None	1-4 times	5-10 times	11+	Total
	23%	47	28	2	100%

Table 9 shows that almost one-quarter were never assigned an essay, and almost half were assigned only one to four essays during their course of study. It seems that essays, like the library, are not an essential element of the curriculum. Almost 70% of third year students and 40% of fourth year students have written four essays or fewer



during their course of study (see appendix J, Table 9A). The data suggest that students are asked to write no more than a few essays each year.

There is a surprising difference between genders, as females were less often required to do essays. The explanation may be that females in the sample were mainly specialising in humanities, for which, the table suggests, essays seem to be less required than for other specialities.

It is important to note that in normal secondary schools, essays are almost non-existent. It appears that this college resembles a secondary school for adults.

Balancing all the negative conclusions drawn from the findings, I made a large positive discovery regarding one major feature in this college. When students were asked in the questionnaire to point out what is the most excellent characteristic of the college, the interesting result was that 70% of students voted for lecturers.

**Table 10**

The most excellent characteristic of the college	Assessment style	The curriculum	Lecturers	Teaching methods	Total
	17	6	70	7	100%

The group interviews and class observations, also, suggest that lecturers are generally admired.

*'We have exceptional lecturers in the college, they are really good'.* (Female student)

*'We have very good ones and some bad ones'.* (Male student)

*'I study music, and I admire..... (he named foreign lecturers) I think they are geniuses'.* (Male student)

Urban students seem less happy with the lecturers than others. Perhaps that is due to the fact that they are exposed, through media and travelling, to other teaching experiences, which have increased their awareness of other standards!

Written examinations as the only method of assessment are voted by 17% of students the best feature of the college. Two-thirds of the older students are strong supporters of this kind of assessment. Perhaps that is because they are older and more conventional.

While the lecturers monopolise the students' choices, it should not be assumed that students think poorly of the other named features of the college. In the group



interviews, students pointing out that if they had been asked to identify more than one feature of the college, they would have picked, perhaps, all the given choices. Students in the college are actually satisfied on the whole with the curriculum and the teaching methods. Doyle (1990) suggested that students may have their own strategies for simplifying classroom demands and may work to reduce any ambiguities for the task in which they will be assessed. The students of this College seem to accept the traditional way of being, as Rudduck (1995) calls it, 'spoon-fed'.<sup>5</sup>

In this section it has been revealed that the curriculum is both traditional and basic. It is not challenging or demanding. Nonetheless the majority of students view it as difficult. Furthermore, from the responses of lecturers and the students, the quality of the curriculum does not seem to be an issue in the college. Also, the pedagogy is highly didactic and lecture-based, with only minimal use of student writing or of reading beyond the textbooks as means of learning. This too is not seen as a major issue to be addressed. Finally, it has been found that the lecturers are held in very high esteem by the students.

#### 4. Students' expectations from the teaching profession

The two questions regarding the main attraction and main disadvantage of teaching as a profession were posed in all the questionnaires devised for this study. The aim of these questions is to understand what is important in Kuwait's culture when choosing a career, a choice which reflects the society's values.

Students in a teacher education college are expected to have enthusiastic and idealistic views about their future profession, but the findings below suggest the contrary.

Table 11

Main attraction to teaching profession	Salary	Single gender	Fits family	Holidays	Love for teaching	Progression	Status	Love for children	Challenging	Total
	33	29	19	14	1	1	1	1	1	100%

<sup>5</sup> Dolye, W. (1990). Classroom Knowledge as a foundation for teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 91(3), 347-360. Also, Rudduck, J. (1995). It's not labour and it's not play: teaching and learning in secondary schools. *The Curriculum Journal*, 2 (2), 125-135.



Table 11 shows that students' main reason for choosing teaching as a career was practical and extrinsic in virtually all cases: salary (33%), gender division (29%), fits family life (19%) and holidays (14%). Females' main attractions to teaching are that

the profession is gender-divided (50%) and it fits family life (22%). And males' main attractions to teaching are its salary (47%) and holidays (20%). Almost none expressed love for either the challenge of teaching (1%) or children (1%). These findings show very clearly the practicality of the students' attitude to their profession. This practical attitude raises questions about the type of teachers that they will be, and the quality of teaching that they will deliver.

**Table 12**

Main disadvantage of teaching profession	Work load	Constant supervision	Status	Salary	Love for teaching	Working with children	Progression	Total
	69	11	8	4	4	4	1	100%

Table 12 shows that, like most school-leavers and most teachers, most students (and especially those who are parents (see appendix J, Table 12A) see the workload as intense, even though it is very low in comparison to other countries.

*'I compare us with other professionals who just sit in an office all day'. (Male student)*

*'All teachers complain about their workload'. (Male student)*

*'Not all teachers complain, some I guess are satisfied'. (Male student)*

*'It is the work pressure that drains the teacher....from her students, parents, head teachers, and the principle'. (Female student)*

However, urban students are notably less concerned than suburbans about the workload (41% compared to 81%), but still select it more frequently than other disadvantages. They are more likely than suburban students to be concerned about the constant supervision over the teacher. Also married students were less likely to be concerned about the workload, and more likely to be concerned about the constant supervision and working with children. A male student observed:

*'Head teacher, supervisors, and inspectors equals headache'.*

The questionnaire responses suggest that females may be more concerned about teachers' status and salaries than males. However, in the group interviews the males



expressed their concern about teachers' status and salaries more noticeably than the questionnaire. As one male student said *'I am actually much more bothered over the wages; my friends in other professions will earn more money'*.

It should be noted that 22% of those students who specialise in Music, PE, or Art (who are mainly urban students) did not seem to like teaching or children (see appendix J, Table 12A). Some further comments of students when discussing these findings included the following:

*'Because you have children that doesn't mean you like children'*. (Female student)

*'Children can drive you nuts'*. (Female students)

*'Art majors are here for the subject not for teaching'*. (Male students)

Lecturers, also, were not surprised by these findings; moreover, they also thought that the teachers' workload is more than that of other professions. One said:

*'If a teacher is teaching two hours a day it doesn't mean it is just two hours, they prepare for the lessons, and mark exams. Also, for these two hours teachers are working with an audience..... Other jobs don't have any of these hassles'*.

Several other lecturers indicated their agreement with this statement.

There is a sense of harmony between the ideologies of the college, the lecturers, and the students. However, there is little evidence of a feeling of pride in their work or a sense of contributing to society amongst them.

## **5. Perceptions of teachers' status**

This section identifies the students' views on the status of teachers in Kuwait, which takes us to the first research question. The students' understanding of the word 'status' refers to prestige and social image. In the group interviews, students did not seem confused about the concept. When asked to explain the word 'status' their 'definitions' were clear.

*'Prestige!'* ( We use the same word in Arabic)

*'The professional image in comparison to others'*.

*'How people look at you'*.

This last definition won signs of approval from other students. The lecturers tended to be more cautious:

*'What do you mean exactly when you say 'status'?''*

*'Status of teachers as I see it differs from one person to another'*.

In the questionnaire, students were asked to indicate the status of teachers on a 3-point scale. Table 13 shows their responses.

**Table 13**

Variables	Status of teachers	Low	Medium	High	Mean
Gender	Female	41	58	1	1.6
	Male	24	70	6	1.8
Age	17-22	24	71	5	1.8
	22-27	35	61	3	1.7
	28+	64	36	0	1.4
Status	Single	19	73	7	1.9
	Married	47	53	0	1.5
	M with child	44	56	0	1.6
Social group	Urban	26	66	9	1.9
	Suburb	35	64	1	1.7
	Mixed	29	67	4	1.8
Year of study	First	16	78	6	1.9
	Second	28	67	5	1.8
	Third	34	64	2	1.7
	Fourth	45	52	3	1.6
Speciality	Humanities	40	60	0	1.6
	Others	22	75	3	1.8
	Science	33	58	9	1.8
Total		31	65	4	1.7

Two-thirds of students view the status of teachers as medium and one third see it as low. Contrary to all other surveys in this study, females tend to have a lower view of the status of teachers than males. A possible explanation is that females in this college are academically more able, as witnessed from the school leavers' survey, therefore their status *criteria* are higher than the males.

Art, Music, and PE majors have higher opinions than others of teachers' status.

Also, the more years students have spent in the college, the lower their views are likely to be of on teachers' status. There is an average annual drop of approximately 9% between the first year and the fourth year in their perception of teacher status. This is a troubling finding. It suggests that the teacher training programme in the college does not foster a sense of honour or pride in being a teacher.

Students in the college seem to lack a sense of self-importance. The students in the group interviews did not seem confident, though they were humorous and at ease.

When asked if they are proud of their profession, they responded as indicated by the following two examples:

*'I cannot say I am proud, also I cannot say I am ashamed.'*



*'I am proud; I think teaching is a respectable job for women'.*

Interestingly, not one of the female students in the group interviews was eager to marry a teacher.

By comparing the results in Tables 14 and 15, some nuances in the students' perspective on teacher status can be identified – while also noting a significant gender effect in the first table.

**Table 14**

Variables	Kuwaitis respect teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender**	Female	3	30	38	28	1	3.1
	Male	10	59	23	6	1	3.7
<b>Total</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.4</b>

**Table 15**

Teachers are appreciated in Kuwait	Yes	Perhaps	Don't know	No	Total
	11	56	15	17	100%

Fifty-two per cent of students believe that teachers are respected and 31% are unsure, while only 11 % of students believe that teachers are appreciated and 56% are unsure. This suggests that students feel that Kuwaitis respect teachers more than they appreciate or admire them. The gender effect is very large for 'respect:' more than twice as many males (69%) as females (33%) are definite that teachers are respected. This means, furthermore, that the difference in confidence levels for respect and for appreciation is greater for males than females.

Another two sets of questions were designed to identify the standing of the teaching profession in comparison with other occupations.

**Table 16: Teachers have lower status than other graduate professions?**

Variables	Teachers have lower status than other graduate professions	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender**	Female	28	58	14	0	0	4.1
	Male	9	34	27	23	8	3.2
Social group**	Urban	14	34	31	14	6	3.3
	Suburb	22	50	14	15	0	3.8
	Mixed	17	46	21	8	8	3.6
Speciality**	Humanities	25	56	13	5	0	4.0
	Others	10	38	25	22	5	3.3
	Science	21	40	21	9	9	3.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3.6</b>

Almost two thirds of the students believe that teachers have low status in comparison to other professions. Twenty per cent are unsure and 17% disagree. Again the gender difference is large. Across all the groups, females are the ones with the most negative views. No less than 86% of them, compared to just half that proportion



(43%) for males, view the status of teachers as lower than other professions. Similarly, less than half of the Art, Music, and PE majors ('others') take this view.

**Table 17 Teachers have equal status with other graduate professions**

Variables	Teachers have equal status with other graduate professions	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender**	Female	0	8	30	53	9	2.4
	Male	9	13	38	35	3	2.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.6</b>

This formulation differs from the preceding by introducing the option of 'equal status'. And when the question of relative status is put in this way, the main difference from the previous set of responses is the substantial increase in the number who 'hesitate'. This brings down the proportion with a definitely negative view to 42%. However, the proportion with a definitely positive view remains much the same at just 16%. The gender difference is reduced, but remains substantial. Female students have been consistently found to have lower views on teachers' status than males.

**Table 16A: High, Medium or Low Status⇒ Lower Status**

Teachers have lower status than other graduate professions	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Students with <b>High</b> perception of teachers' status	0	17	<b>17</b>	17	50	2.0
Students with <b>Medium</b> perception of teachers' status	13	45	<b>20</b>	17	4	3.4
Students with <b>Low</b> perception of teachers' status	31	49	<b>18</b>	2	0	4.1

**Table 17A: High, Medium or Low Status⇒ Equal Status**

Teachers have equal status with other graduate professions	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Students with <b>High</b> perception of teachers' status	33	0	<b>33</b>	33	0	3.3
Students with <b>Medium</b> perception of teachers' status	5	17	<b>42</b>	37	1	2.9
Students with <b>Low</b> perception of teachers' status	2	0	<b>24</b>	57	16	2.5

Tables 16A and 17A show the correlations between the two questions of *comparative* status ('lower' and 'equal') and the earlier question of whether teacher status was high, medium or low where no explicit comparison was suggested. Some of the correlations simply show that students are being consistent in their responses. For example, of those who think teacher status is low, 80% also think it is lower than for other graduate professions and 84% think it is not equal to other graduate professions, and the small remainders in these cases choose mainly the 'tentative' option. (Also, those who view teachers as having low status are the most certain group. They are certain that teachers' status is not equal to other professions, and they are more certain that teachers' status is lower than other professions.).



However, some of the correlations shown advance our findings further, especially regarding those who identify teachers' status as medium (who are the majority). It emerges that 58% of these 'moderates' think teachers' status is lower than for other graduate professions, though when they are offered the option of 'equal status', 44% of them hover over the 'hesitant' option.

### **Comparing perceptions of status across the surveys**

The tables below represent the data from the surveys of the public, the school-leavers, teachers, and teacher students in regard to the status of teachers.

**Table 18**

Public perceptions of teachers' status	Low	Medium	High	Mean
Total	10%	60%	30%	2.2

**Table 18A**

School leavers' perceptions Status of teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean
	Low (21%)			Medium (61%)				High (17%)			(On a scale of 3) 1.9
Total	4%	6%	11%	13%	19%	17%	12%	14%	1%	2%	(On a scale of 10) 5.2

**Table 18B**

Teachers' perception of their status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Mean
	Low (32%)			Medium (57%)				High (11%)			(On a scale of 3) 1.8
Total	12%	8%	12%	9%	26%	15%	7%	7%	2%	2%	(On a scale of 10) 4.6

**Table 18C**

Student-teachers' perceptions of teachers' status	Low	Medium	High	Mean
Total	31%	65%	4%	1.7

Comparing the results, while the 'means' for all the surveys fall into the 'medium' category, there are significant differences as to where they are placed inside this category. There is a 0.5 mean difference between the public view of teacher status, which is the most positive, and the student-teacher view, which is the most negative. School leavers, and teachers also view teachers as having lower status than the opinion of the public generally. Again, looking at the 'High' column, only 4% of student teachers believe that teachers have high status, in comparison with 30% of the public, 25 % of the school leavers, and 11% of teachers.

The findings suggest that people outside the profession are more sentimental as they look back on their schooling, and also suggest that people in an actual teaching environment have lower views than others about teachers' status.

The problem that arises here is that we are looking at the next generation of teachers as they prepare to enter the profession with the *lowest* views about their professional status. How enthusiastic can we expect them to be? The impact of their low self-image could affect the education system as a whole.



## 6. Perceptions of the status of teacher education institutions

This section identifies the students' views regarding the status of their own college.

Table 19

College of Basic Education has low status	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
	17	66	9	6	1	3.9

As this table shows, the majority of students (and this applies across all variables) believe that their college has low status. Only 7% of the students disagree. Yet the students in this college seem happy with the curriculum, teaching methods, and lecturers.

Table 20

Education College has higher status than College of Basic Education	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
	35	56	5	4	0	4.2

The students also view the other teacher education institution as having much higher status. Here, too, the degree of consensus must be noted: 91% of the students across all the variables believe that Education College has a better status than theirs. Indeed, these two questions attracted the strongest consensus of any item on the questionnaire – and in both cases that consensus was negative for the students' sense of status.

The obvious differences between the colleges, as noted earlier, are: Education College is mixed gender; is part of Kuwait University, whereas the College of Basic Education used to be only a polytechnic; Education College, when it was opened, had a four-year programme and its students graduated with a bachelors degree, whereas the College of Basic Education, when it began, it had a two-year programme and its graduates received only a diploma. Education College produces graduate secondary teachers, whereas the College of Basic Education produces graduate primary teachers. The Education College has a slightly higher entry requirement than the College of Basic Education.

The impact of all of these differences must have an impact on the status of the colleges, which inevitably influences the status of the graduates. According to the teachers' and school leavers' surveys the majority believed that primary teachers have a lower status than secondary teachers. This was also borne out in this case study.



Table 21

Primary teachers have lower status than secondary teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
	13	61	22	4	0	3.8

In the group interviews, the students generally lacked any clear explanation of why primary teachers should have a lower status than secondary teachers, though some students stated:

*'I guess secondary teachers have better qualifications?'* (female student)

*'Maybe because they deal with adults?'* (male student)

Trying to interpret the findings and determine possible explanations is difficult as the road is quite ambiguous. In some countries primary and secondary teachers are not on an equal pay scale, and/or primary teachers are 'general' teachers whereas secondary teachers are 'specialist', and/or (in some developing countries) primary schools are for all children while secondary schools are reserved for some children only. These three factors could generally have an impact on the comparative status of the two sets of teachers. However, none of them apply in the case of Kuwait; where primary and secondary teachers have the same salaries and are specialist subject teachers in both cases, and where all children get a free secondary education. Also, both primary and secondary teachers use a traditional, old-fashioned style in teaching. The only obvious difference may be the different levels of 'subject matter knowledge' of primary and secondary teachers. As many parents may feel that they could teach their child primary-level, but not secondary-level, curricula, so secondary teachers may appear superior due to the more complex nature of their subject knowledge. This leads on to the question of the knowledge that teachers of different kinds need.

During my fieldwork I discovered that students felt that all they needed to learn was subject knowledge and they would become instant teachers. They did not feel that any additional skills were necessary or needed. This was due mainly to the assumption that being students for the past twelve years had provided those skills already. This has led to students entering the college with little expectation of learning a great deal, though comments in this area were varied:

*'Qualification first, learning second'* (male student)

*'Of course I am here to learn'* (male student)

*'I am here to finish and get a job'* (male student)

*'I am here to become a teacher'* (female student)



When a male student asserted *'anybody can teach'*, the other students in the group did not express disagreement. Yet all of them agreed that there are good and bad teachers, but they often reach for an explanation of this in 'personality' terms, rather than in terms of 'skills' that can be learnt.

*'Not all teachers have strong personality; it is a must in teaching'* (male student)

Students were also asked in the questionnaire to identify their perceptions on teachers' required knowledge and expertise.

**Table 22: Teaching skills?**

Teaching requires special skills	Yes	Perhaps	Don't know	No	Total
	49	48	3	0	100%

Broadly, half are sure that teaching does require special skills or expertise (but they might have been thinking of subject knowledge) and the other half prefer a cautious 'perhaps' to a direct negative.

Educationalists are very familiar with the idea that student-teachers have that possessing knowledge is more important for the teacher than knowing how to transmit that knowledge to the students. Weinstein (1989) noted that students begin teacher education programs with their own ideas and beliefs about how to be a good teacher. Their conceptions are formed from thousands of hours of observation of teachers, over the previous fifteen or so years.<sup>6</sup>

The educational modules in the college focus on teaching strategies and learning psychologies. Students seem not to value or learn much from these modules.

So far, it has been revealed that overwhelmingly in the students' eyes the College of Basic Education is lower than the status of Education College. And this surely connects with their other perception that primary teaching has less status than secondary teaching. The latter, in turn, connects in Kuwait with the questionable assumption that primary teachers need much less knowledge than secondary teachers, because the only knowledge that counts is subject knowledge. And, to close the loop – or vicious circle – that view 'legitimizes' a low view of both the academic abilities and the teacher education that primary teachers need. There is all this negative energy of the students' low perceptions of their own status, of the status

<sup>6</sup> Weinstein CS., 1989, *Teachers education students' preconceptions of teaching*, Journal of Teacher Education, 40(2): 53- 60.



of teaching as a profession generally and of the status of primary teaching in particular. It is not difficult to see how it could be washing around the education system as a whole and weighing it down. It therefore is important to look for a way, or ways, to break out of the vicious circle.

## **7. Students' proposals**

Considering the students had expressed their views concerning status, I thought it would be important and interesting to invite them to suggest ways of improving this situation. Students were asked in an open-ended question in the questionnaire to propose ways to increase the status of their college. Here are some examples of the students' comments. They are, like so many of the comments from students and lecturers quoted earlier, tend to be short and direct. This kind of brevity is almost a cultural characteristic of Kuwaiti people.

- 1) *'More parking spaces.*
- 2) *More benefits for the students.'*

*'Develop the quality of the building, more subject matter modules, and less core Educational modules.'*

*'Give subject matter knowledge the capacity it deserves, and no need for the other unnecessary modules'*

*'The college is difficult difficult difficult difficult, please make it easier.'*

*'Develop the curriculum, lecturers, buildings, and increase the benefits.'*

1. *'Restore the buildings*
2. *Better cafeteria*
3. *More parking spaces, so we don't have to spend too much time parking.'*

The students' views were then summed up and categorized and presented on the table below.



Table 23

How can we raise the status of the college?	Total
Improve the appearance of the college	60%
Focus on speciality subjects rather than educational subject	10%
Improve the curriculum	7%
Make the curriculum easy, to appeal to more students	5%
Improve the quality of the lecturers	2%
Improve the assessment methods	5%
Listening to students voice	5%
Students to study hard and be the best	3%
No need its good enough	1%
Increase teachers' salary	1%
We can't	1%
Total	100%

There was much consensus among the students about changing the face of the college, which may seem superficial but nevertheless it could be significant. Students believed that renovating the college buildings to a higher if not more luxurious standard could well have a huge impact on the colleges' status. Could they be right?

As been mentioned earlier, the college building style is very similar to school buildings (schools in Kuwait look alike). People can only recognize that it is a college from the sign at the entrance. The college lacks any sense of luxury, style or history. In a society that highly values the cover of a book, this makes it unattractive.

It should be noted that the buildings are not entirely devoid of comfort: all classrooms are air-conditioned and there is free parking for all students. However, students did not perceive these as luxuries; they complained that the corridors are not air conditioned, and that the parking is not covered to protect their cars from the sun. In their defence, it should be marked that the temperature in the summer is around 50c.

Within the group interviews, also, there was a high emphasis on improving the buildings. As one male student commented: *'Imagine if the college looked like a 5 star hotel. Don't you think that its status will improve? I'm sure that will attract more students'*.

A female student: *'If they opened sites in other areas, more people would enter the profession'*.

Other comments in both the questionnaire and the group interviews were based around curriculum development. Here, 10% believe that if the college concentrates on specialised subjects that will improve its status. It is likely that some students

disregard the importance of educational knowledge, as was mentioned earlier, and focus on the prestige of 'scientific' knowledge. Even though the majority of their modules concern education, for them the focal point is the specialism.

### **Summary**

The College of Basic Education may be offering a refuge for specific types of students, since it is unlike the high prestige colleges. The students have chosen it because of its easy entry requirements, or because it suits their social circumstances. They mostly have no strong passion for their profession, moreover 20% of students actually stated that they did not like teaching! The curriculum and pedagogy are traditional, and both students and staff seem to be pleased with that fact. The curriculum is not demanding by many standards, but students find it difficult. Arguably, the students have too narrow a view of the skills and knowledge they will require as primary teachers, and this links up with the fact that their views of the status of teaching, primary teaching and their own College all tend to be low. In comparison to other surveys student teacher perception of the status of teachers was found to be the lowest and their perceptions of the teacher education institutions were also low. Therefore, the College of Basic Education, with its conservative traditional status, is unappealing to many Kuwaitis (especially in the capital). However, Kuwaitis who live in the suburbs, embracing all the old fashioned traditions, are pleased to send their children and wives to a traditional non-mixed college.

## Chapter Eight: Conclusion and Recommendations

### Conclusion

Much evidence was presented in the literature survey to illustrate the global struggle of teachers for better status. In the Western world the struggle of teachers for the professional recognition that comes along with higher status and more pay, greater autonomy, increased self-regulation and improved standards of training has a long history. This struggle has been persistently resisted by cost-conscious and control-centred governments and bureaucracies.<sup>1</sup> There are a few historical exceptions when governments have attempted to improve the status of teachers, such as the substantial salaries achieved by Canadian teachers in the 1970s, the high degree of autonomy over curriculum development and decision-making enjoyed by British teachers in the 1960s and early 1970s<sup>2</sup> and the conversion of teaching to an all-graduate profession during the same period almost everywhere. However, the endless battle has often made teachers undecided about whether to accept middle-class status or use the collective strategies of union bargaining to defend their interests. Teachers often seem uncertain whether their identity is that of professionals or cultural workers.<sup>3</sup>

The problem of status of teachers is not absolutely context-specific; however, the solutions are. In Kuwait society, teachers' struggle for better status is not related to their pay, nor to their lack of autonomy. It is much more related to the actual standard of teachers in the sense of the quality of the people entering the profession and of their training.

This study defines the status of teachers in Kuwait by reviewing three major surveys for the public, teachers, and school leavers. The research questions concerning the status of teachers were answered through direct questions, where the respondents had to identify the standing of teachers in comparison to other professions, and through indirect questions, where factors which affect the status of a profession, and in particular, the teaching profession, were addressed.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *Teachers' Professional Lives: Aspiration and Actualities*, London, Falmer Press.

<sup>2</sup> Grace, G., 1987, *Teachers and the state in Britain: A changing relationship*, London, Falmer Press.

<sup>3</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I., 1996, *op cit*.



The second main research question concerned the association between the status of teachers and teacher education institutions. This question was answered by means of the surveys, supplemented by a case study in one teacher education institution.

Based on the findings of the surveys, the study now moves on to find ways to improve the standing of teachers in Kuwait, with special focus on teacher education institutions.

As explained in the literature survey, from the perspective of Walsh's (1993) categorisation of educational discourses,<sup>4</sup> the form of enquiry in this study mainly combines 'scientific discourse', inasmuch as it describes and analyses the status of teachers in Kuwait, with 'deliberative discourse', inasmuch as it attempts to find and direct the best possible ways of improvement or development. Walsh pointed out that educational discourses are very much context-specific. This chapter draws attention to the findings of the first 'scientific' discourse (exploring of the status of teachers), and then moves on to discuss ways for improvement, as it makes a deliberate attempt to find applicable ways for developing the standing of teachers in Kuwait.

### **What is the status of teachers in Kuwait?**

The status of teachers in Kuwait is distinctive, due to the atypical position which teachers have, and due to the atypical cultural situation; teachers in Kuwait are fairly wealthy, with an 'easy to get' qualification, in a wealthy, educated, and Islamic society. I can nonetheless claim that there is a crisis in the teaching profession there. The status of teachers has been eroded to a point where teachers feel themselves devalued as professionals. This erosion acts to increase the reluctance of potentially good teachers to enter the profession.

### ***Direct indications***

According to the public survey, most Kuwaitis believe that teachers have medium status. Only 10% believe that teachers in Kuwait have low status, yet 90% of Kuwaitis think that teachers deserve better status.

The school leavers suppose that the status of teachers, assessed on a scale from 1 to 10, is close to the middle (mean 5.2), though in response to another direct question the majority agree that teachers have low status. One of the core findings

---

<sup>4</sup> Walsh distinguishes four discourses: utopian, deliberative, evaluative, and scientific. Walsh, P., 1993, *Education and meaning: Philosophy in practice*, London, Cassell.

from the school leavers' survey is that urban and academically able students are more demanding in regard to their inclination for status than others, and, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, those students' perceptions of the standing of the teaching profession have a major impact on the status of teachers.

Most teachers also believe that they have a lower status than other professions; this is especially so for primary teachers. On a scale of 1 to 10, teachers identified their status as an average of 4.8. On the basis of the evidence collected in this thesis, I conclude that teachers are unsatisfied and concerned by their status. Males and urban teachers have a lower opinion of their status than others. Generally, teachers believe that teachers' status affects the entry to the profession. Lamentably, only 16% of teachers would encourage their children to become teachers.

As the student-teacher survey shows, students believe that the status of teachers is mediocre; 96% of students identified their status as between medium and low. They have a very low opinion of the standing of teachers in comparison to those in other professions.

All the above findings show that the status of teachers in Kuwait is in a predicament. Nevertheless, the public seem to have higher views on the standing of teachers than those who are inside the system. We need to ask what factors does the society consider when they identify the status of a profession? And to what extent do those factors affect the status of teachers?

### ***Indirect indications***

In the surveys some keywords were used to examine their relevant implications for the status of teachers; the respect, the appreciation, the honour, and the prestige of teachers were examined.

Though teachers have medium to low status, they seem to be moderately respected in Kuwait. It is evident from the public and the student teachers' surveys that more than two-thirds of the public and more than half of the student teachers believe that teachers are respected. Therefore the respect in which a profession is held does not seem to have much impact on its status. The appreciation of a profession seems to be more linked to its status. School leavers and teachers who think that teachers are not appreciated also believe that teachers' status is low.

When school leavers and teachers were asked if teachers have equal prestige with other graduate occupations, the majority disagreed. Only one-quarter of school leavers think that teachers have equal prestige with those in other graduate occupations, and again only one-quarter of teachers think the same. At the same time, they believe that the status of teachers is low in comparison to those in other graduate occupations. Therefore the association between the two concepts (status and prestige) seems to be established.

Teachers and school leavers were also asked to identify the most prestigious occupation by responding to a closed question. The teaching profession came last in this poll. Doctors and politicians were perceived as having the most prestigious professions. Intelligence and maybe power seem to define 'prestige' from the point of view of these groups. (From this perspective, the lack of autonomy could be a negative factor in teachers' professional status<sup>5</sup>).

Almost half of the school leavers – including more than two-third of urbans – think that the lack of prestige is the greatest disadvantage of teaching.

When teachers and school leavers were asked to identify the most honourable occupation, they seem to have different opinions. School leavers perceive teaching as the least honourable; however, twenty-two percent of teachers view their profession as the most honourable. Doctors and clerics received the most votes from the teachers themselves, whereas doctors and politicians were the most honourable in the school leavers' opinion. Teachers seem to differentiate, more than school leavers, between the sense of honour and prestige.<sup>6</sup>

The finding suggests that 'honour', from teachers' perspectives, is related to altruistic professions, where serving God or the society regardless of its financial rewards are its common features. The public, the school leavers, teachers, and student teachers are aware of the fact that those who are in the teaching profession are there for materialistic motives. One of the consequences of their extrinsic interest in teaching is that teachers are not honoured now as before (or so 82% of teachers believe).

---

<sup>5</sup> This study will not focus on the link between teachers' lack of autonomy and their status, as the focus is mainly directed to teacher education; however, the association between teachers' autonomy and status is worth further investigation.

<sup>6</sup> Though teachers with the highest qualifications feel that teaching is very honoured as a profession, they also feel that it is the least prestigious profession.



Overall, teaching as a profession is found to be not prestigious, not honourable and not appreciated; thus it has low status.

### **What is the status of teacher education?**

There are only two teacher education institutions in Kuwait, and I have attempted to identify the status of both those institutions. In all the surveys, the statuses of both teacher education institutions were investigated through direct questions, and sometimes, through indirect questions. Also, from the case study, the status of the College of Basic Education was explored.

#### ***Direct indications***

According to the public survey, there is no general consensus about the status of the College of Basic Education, though slightly more than half think it is low and the majority (76%) believe that it is lower than that of the Education College.

The majority of students do not believe that the College of Basic Education has high status, and most students are aware of the fact that teacher education is not generally considered to be suitable for academically able students. Student teachers have a very low opinion of their college status, and also a low opinion of their own professional status. Their humble opinion of themselves was observed throughout the case study.

Interestingly, many teachers are unsure about the status of teacher education institutions. There is also a division in their judgments regarding the status of those colleges, though it is seen as more negative than positive. Also the Education College is viewed as having higher status than the other college.

#### ***Indirect indications***

Findings about the quality of those who are considering the profession suggests some of the factors that could have an impact on the status of teacher education.

From the school leavers' survey, it was revealed that those who are considering teaching are the least academically able students. The school leavers, the teachers and the student teachers are all aware of this fact.

It is also revealed that those who are considering entering teacher education institutions and those who are in the programme have similar social status; they are mainly suburbans. Urban students do not seem to be attracted to the profession.

Those who are considering teaching choose it for extrinsic motives (salaries and holidays). Most of the students who are in the College of Basic Education are attracted to the profession firstly because of the salary, secondly because it is a segregated gendered profession, thirdly because it fits family life, and fourthly because of the holidays. Only 1% regards the practice of teaching as an attraction to the profession, and only 1% is attracted to the profession by the love of children. Actually, 20% of the students do not like teaching. Their main reason for entering the College of Basic Education was because it is easy to do so.

40% of the students in the College of Basic Education have repeated at least one module; they perceive the curriculum as traditional and difficult.

Teachers in Kuwait are not pleased with the teaching programmes of the colleges in Kuwait; the majority believe that the curriculum of the colleges is inadequate and unchallenging. The lecture is the only method of teaching; students do not use the library much, and do not need to do many essays. The great majority of teachers believe that the profession needs to be more selective, which suggests that they are unhappy with the graduates of the colleges.

The status of teacher education is proven to be critically low; the poor quality of those who are considering teaching is the most lucid illustration of the low status of teacher education and thus of teaching.

Looking across the surveys shows that teachers' perception of their status is the lowest, in comparison to the public and the school leavers' perceptions. And the school leavers' views on teacher education institutions are the most negative. The public have more moderate opinions in regard to the status of both teachers and teachers' institutions.

The impact of the school leavers' opinions matters the most, since those are the ones whose views on teachers could be crucial for the quality of future teachers.

The findings of the surveys were presented to two elite members, and even though they come from different political groups, neither of them seemed surprised with most of the findings.

Although the differences in their views regarding my topic were small, the minister was more pragmatic in his approach to development, and the former minister (a left-wing member of the parliament) was more cynical. The former minister is a philosopher and a lecturer in the university; therefore, on many occasions during the interview, he drifted from the subject to a discussion about the features of Kuwaiti society. He emphasized his points by recalling Arabic poetry. The minister, on the other hand, gave very short and precise answers.

The reflections which emerged from the findings will be presented in five main themes, and some comments from the two members of the elite will be highlighted throughout the discussion.

### **Taught by foreigners**

The atypical situation of teachers in Kuwait has led to very confusing perceptions of the status of teachers. Explanations for these variations in perceptions were given in responses to the open question in the questionnaires and in some informal interviews. Some answered according to what they 'thought they should' believe; others were focusing on teachers' financial status, and others bore in mind the non-nationals' conceptions.

In the past, when Kuwaitis were not sufficiently educated to teach, the government had to import Arabic-speaking foreigners to educate the uneducated society. Teachers then had higher status, but still received low salaries. The reason for the strong pedagogical abilities of non-nationals is that Kuwait used to bring elites from other countries to teach with a renewable yearly contract; as a result, teachers used to work hard to prove themselves. Those teachers had little prestige, in the sense of power, authority and salary, but were still admired.

Thus, the former minister was surprised by the finding in the public survey, where there were almost equally divided attitudes on how knowledgeable and dedicated foreign teachers are in comparison to Kuwaiti teachers. He thought that the public would incline more towards the foreign teachers.



Kuwaitis nowadays have two main images of teachers: a Kuwaiti teacher with poor ability to teach but well paid, and a knowledgeable non-national who does not earn enough, and has no power, no authority and no appreciation from the government, the parents, and thus the students.

The logic behind the public uncertainty about foreign teachers is that the public are trapped between their sense of superiority over foreigners and at the same time their reverence towards the foreign teachers. Their views are based on the fact that eastern non-nationals are perceived as people from uncivilized nations who should be grateful to be there! Public schools used to (and still) hire Middle Eastern non-nationals as teachers, mainly because of their knowledge of Arabic languages. These non-national teachers have educated all Kuwaitis until very recently. Kuwaitis are conscious of this debt, however, some cultural factors overrule the gratitude they might feel.

Kuwait is a society where Kuwaitis get the occupations with high status and foreigners get the occupations with low status. Consequently, professions that include foreigners may have low status. Eastern non-nationals mainly have labouring occupations. Therefore, humble occupations are associated with them. These conceptions of non-nationals may have started when Kuwaitis began to employ maids in each household, three decades ago. The average maid's salary is 30 KD (60 pounds) monthly, for working exceedingly hard! These maids used to be, in the 1960s and 70s, mainly from Egypt. Since then, Kuwaitis have employed maids mainly from India and the Philippines. The fact is that Kuwaitis treat "their" maids in discreditable ways; this perhaps has a direct impact on the public views of Eastern non-national teachers.

On the other hand, Western foreigners have high status. Kuwaitis are aware that modernisation, developments, and progress come from the West. They are also aware of the power, knowledge and abilities of the West. They generalise from their assumption, believing that almost any Western professional is more able or capable than others, including themselves. Therefore, Westerners in Kuwait obtain good positions with high wages. Accordingly, private schools are known to have better status than public schools, since Western teachers work in them.

The conflict between Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti teachers is subtle. When the public judge the standing of teachers in the society, they must do so against some image

that seeks to encompass teachers as a whole. This image will be blurred and vague, but it will contain within itself the conflict of perceptions just outlined. That is likely to make the profession seem less attractive to academically able and higher status students. They do not want to be perceived as less knowledgeable or less capable than foreigners of some kinds, nor as powerless and inferior as other kinds of foreigners.

### **Nationalisation versus selectivity**

It was shown that half of the population complains about teachers' quality and sees educational standards as declining. Many average Kuwaiti families avoid public education, and send their children to private schools. Although Kuwait is a rich country, even wealthy families used to send their children to public schools. Private schools were mainly for foreigners who did not speak Arabic. Now, private schools have become the norm. People who cannot afford the fees for private schools may take out loans in order to meet the expenses of their children's' private education. What has changed in the last decade? Before further discussion, let us remember that there are only eleven Kuwaiti teachers in private schools!

I mentioned earlier that the government's policy used to ensure, and still does so, that any national opting to enter the public sector is guaranteed employment, regardless of education level. The education system was and still is driven by social demands for general education at ever-higher levels, without any real concern for competitive selection or standards. As there is little regard for selectivity and quality control, large numbers of students progress to undergraduate levels of study. This has caused low outcomes in the sense that graduates are not necessarily well qualified.

According to the survey of school-leavers, the vast majority (85%), including the less academically able students, are planning to enter higher education. These results demonstrate the ideology of higher education, where selectivity does not play a part, since access is not only easy, but also free. These results also show how keen Kuwaitis are to acquire higher education.

The status of teachers in Kuwait has been affected by the lack of selectivity in two ways, apart from the decline of the numbers of good teachers. In a society where the majority enters higher education, and is highly educated, teaching has become not

an outstanding profession as it used to be in the past when almost all Kuwaitis were uneducated.

Moreover, whilst Kuwait's education system was designed to develop the nationals' ability to replace the non-nationals by offering very attractive financial packages and unconditional life-long employment, the excessive comfort and lack of competition may have made teachers less motivated to develop their skills and knowledge.

Although school-leavers believe that teachers have a low status in comparison to other professions, a high percentage of students (28%) desire to become teachers. The apparent rationale behind this is that teaching is potentially a good career, with good salaries and holidays. This narrow and materialistic approach is apparent in the way that students rationalize their career choices; the majority of males choose teaching for the salary, and the majority of females do so for the holidays. The gender-division is a popular reason for suburban females. This package may compensate for teachers' low status, although even more students might have considered teaching if it had higher status. Compared with other countries the teaching profession in Kuwait is narrower both socially and intellectually; academically poor, and suburban students are the ones who are considering teaching.

It can be supposed that the social and cultural imbalance in the Kuwaiti teaching force that emerges in this study is affecting the education system. A hidden curriculum effect related to the large exposure to just one type of teachers, the suburbans, is likely, with many children bringing home with them values that are in tension with the ones taught in their homes. This would create a certain conflict both in the minds of those children and between their parents and the schools. Nevertheless, both members of the elite were uncomfortable when discussing the social class issue; hence within Kuwaiti culture it is socially accurate to discuss social division, yet politically incorrect!

Although more females are considering teaching (there is a 20% difference between genders), it does not seem that we are heading towards the feminisation of the profession in Kuwait. Also, there is a difference between the proportions of humanities and science students who are considering teaching as a career (68 % difference). The importance of these findings lies in the fact that the difference is directly affecting the inputs of teacher institutions, and consequently their outputs.



At present more than 95% of teachers in kindergartens and the primary level, and 50% at the secondary level, are Kuwaitis.<sup>7</sup> The government's plan has worked in this respect, but has produced some unintended consequences; the status of teachers and teaching has declined. This concentration on the national identity of teachers has perhaps affected the status of teachers in the eyes of the public.

The lack of quality among teachers has caused the occupation to become more susceptible to tighter administrative control; the image of teaching as a non-intellectual, custodial, overly managed job currently constrains the aspirations of talented practising teachers and threatens the recruitment of good teachers. The Kuwaiti government disregards the fact that, as Morris (2001) has pointed out, *'no reform in education can work without high quality staff. Standards cannot be raised without the skills and commitment of our teachers'*<sup>8</sup>.

In the public survey, teacher quality was chosen as by far the main educational problem, and half of the public believe that foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers. Ultimately, most Kuwaitis believe that teachers enter the profession for materialistic purposes.

Increasing the selectivity of the profession by increasing the entry scores did not seem applicable, from the elite members' point of view. Nevertheless, logically, in a rich small country, they could increase the entry requirements and keep importing good foreign teachers. With time, this policy could work in enhancing teachers' status. But perhaps, the government since the first Gulf war is very conscious of a desire not to hire so many foreigners that they could outnumber the nationals.

### **Cultural ideologies and status**

In all the surveys, respondents were invited to consider what motivates teachers to enter the profession. The reflections on the findings show a cultural ideology; people in Kuwait enter the profession for practical reasons. Salaries are the most appealing factor; moreover, 88% of teachers believe that increasing their salary may increase the status.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Education, 2006, *The statistic dairy, 2005/2006 Kuwait*, Planning Department, Environmental Changes Follow- UP Supervision.

<sup>8</sup> Morris, R. H.E.,2001, *Professionalism and Trust, the future of teachers and teaching*, Department for education and skills, p. 12

Holidays seem to be the second most attractive element, especially in Kuwait, where teachers have four months of holiday every year (three months in the summer break, and one month for the break between terms). The gender divided environment is also an attractive reason, mainly for females.

The reality is that improving the salaries to attract people to the profession has backfired. The government's approach to attract Kuwaitis to the teaching profession by increasing their salary has affected negatively the quality of teachers entering the profession.

Teachers now have low status in comparison to other graduate occupations. The combination of government policies and generally indifferent public attitude has created a simple logic for dealing with teaching as a career; teaching has become a profession for the least able students, or for those who do not care about their social status.

The Minister's concern was about finding ways to attract males to the profession, and the way this has been done is by lowering the entry scores for males to 65%. He does not believe that teaching is considered an attractive option for males in Kuwait; yet it is suitable for women, due to the status and nature of the profession. As he said, *'I will not encourage my son to become a teacher, yet I may encourage my daughter'*.

The government's ideology goes parallel with the public's ideology. Both the Minister and the former Minister believe that the way to improve the status of teachers in Kuwait is by increasing their salaries. The former Minister was asked if increasing the salaries is a superficial solution. He replied: *'for a superficial society we need a superficial solution'*. Similarly, the serving Minister seems to believe that increasing the salary always improves status.

On the other hand, according to the surveys of teachers, school-leavers, and student-teachers, teachers' workload is the main negative factor in teaching. Yet teachers work on average 12 hours a week, which is 2 hours a day. Perhaps the only rationale for this discontent, is how leisure oriented the society is. In regard to the general dissatisfaction of teachers and students with the teachers' workload, the former Minister replied:

*'The society operates with a theory called, 'I don't feel like it-sim', nobody wants to do anything; they don't feel like working, they don't feel like taking their kids to school, they don't feel like cooking or cleaning. So it is not about the workload, it is about the society itself'.*

In the end, the view that if the public sector wants the brightest and the best they have to be highly paid may be erroneous. Teachers' lack of passion, purpose and energy cannot be compensated for, regardless of money.<sup>9</sup> In other societies, some could argue, teachers just accept their middle-class status, and accept teaching as an altruistic profession serving a common good. And rather than relying on undemocratic concepts that brings privilege, special status, and the superiority of mental over manual labour, teachers should look to other bases for professionalisation. Nevertheless, this argument cannot work in such a unique, trouble-free, and practical culture.

In Britain, it might be said, the society generally values teachers.<sup>10</sup> That could be due to the fact that teachers teach for the love of teaching and forming a relationship with the children in their care, while money is not the main attraction for teaching<sup>11</sup>. Within that cultural attitude, the establishment of the GTC<sup>12</sup> represented a major step toward strengthening teachers' professional status by allowing the profession the power of self-regulation.<sup>13</sup> This strategy could not apply in Kuwait, when teachers just want to finish their work and go home.

### **Teachers' professionalism and status**

We have mentioned in earlier chapters that there has been some debate over the years as to whether teaching really is a profession. In modern societies, there seems to be an enormous interest, politically and administratively, in identifying, codifying and applying professional standards of practice to the teaching force.<sup>14</sup> Certainly, primary and secondary school teaching has become much more professionalized in

---

<sup>9</sup> Waddell, N., and Hallgarten, J. , 2001, *Transforming Teacher status*, Conference Report, GTC,

<sup>10</sup> Morris, 2001, *op.cit.*

<sup>11</sup> Waddell, N., and Hallgarten, J. , 2001, *op cit.*

<sup>12</sup> The General Teaching Council (GTC) was established by the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998. The GTC is governed by a Council of 64 members, of whom 44 are practising teachers. The Council also includes representation from other interest groups, including parents.

<sup>13</sup> Teacher Magazine, 2003, *Highlights on status*. Issue 16 March.

<sup>14</sup> In the United States a National Board of Professional Teaching Standards has been established, which teachers can choose to join by having their knowledge and skills inspected and certified by their peers. In England and Wales, the creation of General Teaching Council has been proclaimed as a policy priority by the Labour Party. In Australia, a standard-certifying Council of teachers, with voluntary membership has been established. In Canada, Ontario has gone further by legislating a self-regulating Teachers' Council (College of teachers) which all teachers will be required to join if they are to be granted certificates to practice. This self-regulating council will draw up an official registration of teachers, define standards of practice, establish a wide framework for professional learning and leadership training, and endorse all programmes of teacher education.



these modern societies over the past three decades than it ever was before. Some authors classify it as a semi-profession, whereas others distinguish secondary school teaching from primary school teaching; for example, in some countries, secondary teachers are educated in universities and primary teachers are not. In that sense, the level of professionalism differs from one society to another.

Rich (1994) lists seven characteristics of a profession. A profession requires a high degree of general and systematized knowledge, requires a long period of specialized intellectual training, is characterized by work that is essentially intellectual, provides a unique social service, controls its standards of entrance and exclusion, develops and enforces a professional code of ethics, and grants practitioners a broad range of autonomy.<sup>15</sup>

No occupation fulfils all of these criteria completely. But for the teaching profession the fulfilment of those criteria differs more dramatically amongst societies. This study reveals that teaching in Kuwait stands out in several ways in respect of these.

Usually the role of a teachers' union or organisation is to advocate, promote, and protect these features of the profession. In such a centralised society as Kuwait the teacher union has no responsibility to develop any aspect of teacher professionalism; the government has not been willing to trust the teachers' organization, and the organisation does not seem to mind. As the situation stands, the union does not represent children, school, or society, nor does it attempt to act in these groups' interests. The union is located in one small building, where members do trivial work: they produce a monthly magazine, and often some afternoon activities for students.

The Teachers' Union in Kuwait has little authority, and since membership is voluntary, teachers seem not concerned to join; none of the teachers interviewed during the research were members; teachers viewed the union as useless and powerless. Some did not even know that this union existed. This kind of union may actually damage the standing of teachers, as it represents their powerless position in the society. The former Minister believes that *'these things cannot work unless teachers take them seriously; teachers simply do not care to do anything about it'*.

---

<sup>15</sup> Rich, J.M., 1994, *Professional ethics in education*. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.

Teacher organization could be the way to promote and protect professionalism by several means, including codes of ethics and codes of professional conduct. The union should act as organizations supporting education. The role of teacher union needs to be investigated. But before we consider the possible role of the union in protecting teachers' professionalism and thus teachers' status, we should develop the foundations of the profession.

Before moving to the 'deliberative' literature, let us finish this discussion by quoting a recommendation by the ILO from 1966 concerning the status of teachers that states:

*'It should be a guiding principle that any severe supply problem should be dealt with by measures which are recognized as exceptional, which do not detract from or endanger in any way professional standards already established or to be established and which minimize educational loss to pupils'.<sup>16</sup>*

### **Intake issues**

In comparison to other professions, teaching is a mass profession; a high percentage of the population enter teaching, so teachers, it is argued, are not 'exceptional people'. This study has confirmed the fact that those who are entering the profession are the least academically able. Moreover, everyone in Kuwait is aware of this fact, even teachers themselves.

The attractiveness of teaching as a prospective career does not seem to be the issue in Kuwait. The status and the quality of teachers seem to be the concern; they matter, especially amongst those who are making choices regarding their future occupation.

In Kuwait, the status of all professions is heavily related to the quality of those who enter them. The quality aspect of those in any profession is related in any society to their intellectual abilities and social background. With the lack of intellectual abilities and social diversity amongst Kuwaiti teachers, the teaching profession cannot match those occupations that are seen as more prestigious.

As this study shows, there is a failure to attract academically able students to teaching and this connects with teacher education being viewed as an easy option. There is also a failure to attract urbans from the capital that connects with a perception of teacher education (and teaching) as a choice for the conservative

---

<sup>16</sup> ILO/UNESCO, 1966, *Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers*.

suburbans. Both colleges are known for their conservative and traditional culture, which is not necessarily attractive to people from the city. The combined effect of these failures is that Kuwaitis do not accord high status to teacher education institutions. And if this status remains the same, the teaching profession can never attract the people who are needed.

What is more, the institutions for teacher education also contribute to demean the status of teachers, especially the College of Basic Education; firstly, because this college used to be a polytechnic school that offered diplomas at a time when all Kuwaitis, without selectivity, were offered scholarships to study degrees abroad. Even though nowadays the College of Basic Education offers degrees, it is still part of a vocational organisation, and it is still called 'معهد', which means an institute that offers only diplomas.

Secondly, the entry score for the College of Basic Education and also for the Education College is low: around 75% for females, and 65% for males. Therefore, it is considered to be a place for students who are 'left over' from elsewhere.

From a utopian perspective, Kuwait could continue to hire quality teachers from abroad and increase the entry requirement. There is a possibility that such an increase may reduce the number of Kuwaiti applicants, but in order to raise the standard this should not be given too much credence. Nevertheless, the Minister believes that raising the entry requirement is not an option, as the result would be that nobody would be interested to join. Maybe increasing the selectivity of the profession is inapplicable, and building on those who are already in is a more practical approach.

### **The way forward ?**

Internationally the teaching profession is problematised as being a largely female domain. However, this is not so in Kuwait, where schools are segregated and with the exception of primary level, there is a reasonable distribution of teachers of both genders. In addition, the teachers' survey revealed that only one-third of the teachers did not believe that more women entering the profession would benefit its status. This finding suggests that if the feminisation is not of a benefit to the teaching profession, it is definitely not a concern.



Another more universal concern is teachers' salaries. Arguably in most modern societies income is a measure of social worth (some economists would claim that it is a simple matter of supply and demand), and to some extent salary level is commensurate with prestige in the community. For instance, in Australia, a study of students' images of teaching showed that salaries and status were strongly related in the minds of most students contemplating teaching, and in some cases students perceived these as being the same thing. The students saw high-status occupations as those where earnings were high, and the majority felt that higher salaries would make teaching more attractive.<sup>17</sup> Conversely, given that people are relatively wealthy in Kuwait, they do not necessarily equate salaries with status. Whilst the majority of school leavers, teachers, teacher-students, and the public believe that the high salaries are the most attractive factor of the profession, they still acknowledge the profession as having only mediocre status.

What has really emerged from this study is that teachers', and future teachers' attitudes and their perceptions of their profession are affecting their status. In England, teachers teach for the love of teaching, so while money is a factor, it is by no means the whole story. (Teachers in England may find this image of them somewhat unrealistic, but when comparing teachers in England to Kuwait that is the picture that is painted).

In Kuwait, the lack of any intrinsic motives for choosing the teaching profession has affected the essence of the profession. Teachers are not proud of their profession, to the extent that 84% of teachers in Kuwait would not encourage their children to become teachers.

This brings us to the central focus of this study, the quality of those who are entering the teaching profession, and the role of teacher education.

### **Teacher Education: Reflections on the findings and recommendations.**

This section is a deliberative attempt, even though in some parts it may seem utopian to some people, to find ways to improve the status of teachers through their teacher education institutions. The focus is mainly on issues of intake and curriculum development.

---

<sup>17</sup> Abbott-Chapman, J., Hull, R., Maclean, R., McCann, H., & Wyld, C. (1991). *Students' Images of Teaching - Factors Affecting Recruitment* (Commissioned Report 8): National Board of Employment, Education and Training; Centre for education, University of Tasmania; Tasmanian Teachers' Federation

Teacher education programmes admit those least able and conservative students, but rather than being cognisant and tactful in dealing with these future teachers in a way to develop their intellectual and spiritual abilities in order to direct them to a more progressive path, the programmes nourish the students' own conceptions and values. Students' backgrounds seem to dominate every aspect of the curriculum. The modules, the teaching methods, the lectures, all are reflecting and confirming the students own values.

For instance, students' social class, and their academic abilities appear to have an impact on the curriculum. Lecturers seem to prefer less demanding methods of teaching, which produce lower educational achievements. They tailor the curriculum to the students' needs, rather than changing the students' conceptions of teaching and learning. Although the profession is not attracting those most suited to the occupation of teaching, a four-years preparation programme should be able to mould them to become well-trained teachers.

In the College of Basic Education, the low self-esteem of student teachers is embraced and emphasised through the curriculum. The study shows that the curriculum is traditional and difficult and almost half the students repeated at least one module during their course of study. The staff use lecturing as the only teaching method, and hand out textbooks to prepare students for their written examinations. Both lecturers and students seem to have a mutual understanding that the students' main reason for entering the College of Basic Education is because it is easy to do so. Students have a low opinion of their college's status and a low opinion of their own professional status.

In spite of the ambivalence and difficulty that there will always be in any attempt to alter teachers' beliefs, programmes for teachers must develop the curriculum in a way that induces the element of belief in their importance and their contribution to their society. Teachers must first believe in their standing in society in order to alter society's belief in them. I quote Morris's speech that:

*'Teachers are, and should be recognized as, a national asset of priceless value. ....Teaching should be acknowledged as a top profession. Some go even further, and put it above all others, because teachers have the ability to unlock the potential of the rest of society-including every future member of the other professions'.*<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Morris, E., 2001, *op cit.*, p.2

It is certainly impractical to convince teachers who have a fixed ideology about teaching to change their ideals by simply making the teacher education curriculum more progressive! Clearly a change of attitude needs to occur at all levels before any progress can be achieved. Yet giving more emphasis to improving the foundation that structures teacher' beliefs could be a start.

The curriculum as it stands allows no room for teachers' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; yet these elements are paramount for meaningful development. Change could be achieved through developing in future teachers an awareness and understanding of the skills and responsibilities which they require to become effective teachers who are able to make a difference in their students' lives.

The programme for teachers should also provide a code of ethics as a guide to resolving the moral problems that confront teachers, with a primary emphasis on protecting the public. It should be a grand statement of overarching principles that earns the respect of the public by reflecting the profession's integrity (Bersoff 1999). These ethical principles, which embody essential values, should be followed by ethical standards and guidelines for good practice.

We shall here recall one of the 1966 ILO recommendations in regard to the status of teachers. This stated that '*teaching should provide society with an adequate supply of teachers who possess the necessary moral, intellectual and physical qualities*'.<sup>19</sup>

Having explored the foundations that may lead students to develop a more vocational as opposed to occupational viewpoint of their profession, we must now move on to another element that may be built on to those foundations; the need to develop teachers' intellectual knowledge and technical skills. It has been argued by many educationalists that technical skills should not be given too much prevalence as many other elements, such as care and personal skills hold more weight. However, specifically in Kuwaiti culture these technical skills could play a massive role in enhancing the image of the profession.

In Kuwait in times when most Kuwaitis were fishermen, teachers used to be considered to be among the elites of society. They were not just teachers; they both made the curriculum and taught it. Later, when the teachers' role was reduced to

---

<sup>19</sup> ILO/UNESCO, 1966, recommendation concerning the status of teachers.



delivering accessible and basic knowledge to children, the status of teachers was diminished. Primary teachers, with their basic knowledge of literacy and numeracy, have a lower status than secondary teachers, who have more advanced knowledge. Then the status of teachers fluctuates according to the level of knowledge which they require.

In an educated society, a teacher's knowledge is considered easily obtainable. Kuwaitis are ambivalent about teachers' knowledge. There is little sympathy for the fact that teaching needs special skills and knowledge. Perhaps the public assumes that a secondary teacher has similar knowledge to a secondary school graduate. The findings show that 40% of school leavers do not believe that teaching requires any skills or special knowledge, and appallingly, 10% of teachers in Kuwait believe so.

The classical professions, such as medicine are probably over-valued in Kuwait; within the high percentage of university graduates, prestige is given to the 'super' graduates who have special knowledge.

Thus, one way to improve the status of teachers is for teaching to be recognised as difficult and requiring special knowledge. Such strategies seem self-serving, suited to increasing teachers' status rather than the quality of the service. However, for Kuwait this strategy may work, as academically able students and their families are obsessed about the prestige of the profession when it comes to career choices. Recognising the teaching profession as difficult may attract those school leavers, and consequently the quality of the service. Of course in the west teaching has increasingly being seen as a very complex and difficult activity to understand and master. That is not to say that teaching should be made artificially complicated in order to enhance the status; teachers really do need this kind of knowledge.

This study endorses the attempts of Shulman (1987)<sup>20</sup> to make teachers' knowledge more 'scientific' by categorizing and codifying their practical and experiential knowledge in more technical and scientific terms. This could make the teaching profession measure up to the classical professions. Shulman's academic quest to develop and clarify a knowledge base for teaching tries to build a structure of teacher professionalism on a foundation of scientific certainty.

---

<sup>20</sup> Shulman, L.S. ,1987, Knowledge and teaching: foundation of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57 (1), 1-22.

The technical skills of teaching, defined by Dunkin (1987) as '*specific aspects of teaching behaviour that are considered to be particularly effective in facilitating desired learning in students*' (p.703)<sup>21</sup>, were posited on the assumption that the teaching act could be broken down into a number of identified 'skills'. These in turn could be functionalised and through training be acquired. These skills would provide teachers with the basis for effective classroom practice.

Many educationalists have argued that there are numbers of shortcomings with this conceptualisation. For example, Marland (1986) argued the difficulties that student teachers face in the interpretation and application of the models in practice.<sup>22</sup> These difficulties centre on the inability of these teachers to establish meaningful links between the skills they acquire and the realities of the classroom.<sup>23</sup> But with proper guidance that focuses on the relationship between the components in practice, and the development of technical skills that reflect the realities of the classroom, it could work.

The curriculum, also, must encourage students to demonstrate a critical understanding of education and social values, of current research and approaches to teaching and learning, of changing social and cultural contexts of education and of the school curriculum. Students should gain intellectual skills in the form of critical self-evaluation and transferable skills such as collaboration and influence, communicating effectively and being creative and imaginative.

Lecturers should be consciously aware of the type of students they are working with, and seek to shape the students' new conceptions of the profession. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the quality of lecturers is linked to the quality of teachers and teaching. They must realise the significance of their work for the quality of teaching, and the potential impact that improvements in their own practice have for raising that quality. They have to be more positive in pursuing opportunities to expand and upgrade the quality of their work, by, for instance, enhancing their knowledge through researches on issues of educational importance. Lecturers could be vital in shaping and defining the status of teachers in Kuwait, if they understand their role in forming

---

<sup>21</sup> Dunkin, M.J.,1987, The technical skills of teaching, in: *M.J. Dunkin the international Encyclopedia of teaching and teacher education*, Sydney Pergamon press, 703-706.

<sup>22</sup> Marland, P.W.,1986, Models of teachers' interactive thinking. *Elementary school journal*, 87(2), 209-226.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

the future teachers, and recognise the need to integrate developments in the curriculum in order to deliver better outcomes.

Perhaps lecturers would face some resistance from the students in their attempt to alter the students' own conceptions and beliefs. But no change, and in this case it is mainly a social change, can be achieved without being opposed by a number of people.

Another approach to make teacher training more attractive to quality teachers is by introducing a two-year programme for university graduates who may prefer to join the profession later in their careers. These may be urban parents who have found that their careers do not suit their situation, or those who discover later in their lives that they have a desire to teach. In England, this is the most popular way for graduates to become a teacher, by completing a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). These one or two-year full-time courses focus primarily on developing teaching skills, and not on knowledge of the subject matters. As such, teachers are expected to have a good understanding of their chosen subject to degree level before they start training.

This post-graduate training could have two main advantages; in addition to a possible attraction to teachers of better quality, it could add more status to the teaching profession, given that the qualifications needed to enter the teaching profession could be acknowledged as 'tough', since teachers would have to complete six years of training (a four-year degree plus two years of teacher training) before starting their careers.

In addition, the government in partnership with the teacher education institutions could promote a certificate of professional status that is designed to recognize and reward the skills and expertise of teachers, similar to Chartered London Teacher status (CLT).<sup>24</sup> This certificate would celebrate the quality of professional practice and commitment to continuing professional development by teachers and recognise the distinctive challenges and opportunities of teaching. Also it would encourage teachers to build on the best professional practice, including observation of others and teachers sharing experience. Teachers could start working towards the status at

---

<sup>24</sup>CLT status was launched in September 2004 and the first teachers will receive the status in September 2006. Any teacher who meets the standards will gain the status and the one-off payment of £1,000.



any time, but it would be awarded only if they have crossed a defined threshold. The achievement of performance management objectives related to a teacher's daily work would be the evidence of meeting the criteria. Teachers' learning from lesson observations (in other schools) would also count towards the certificate.

The teacher education system could also introduce a Master of Teaching degree that enables experienced teachers to meet the requirements for this professional status certificate through a programme of professional development, which includes academic study, work-based learning and professional action. Such a programme should aim to enhance professional understanding, knowledge, skill and action of teachers with a view to supporting the development of their practical classroom skills. It should also aim to enhance teachers' understanding of teaching and learning, critical analysis and evaluation of practice, and to enable teachers to meet the demands of a rapidly changing educational and professional environment.

The aim would be to produce Kuwaiti teachers who are able to demonstrate the capacity to evaluate their practice, reflect critically upon it and, in building upon that, show improved professional performance that will contribute effectively to the quality of educational experience in the classroom, the school and the wider educational community.<sup>25</sup>

Another, perhaps, effective way to improve their status would be by arranging for student- teachers and teachers to have a one-year experience of international education.

In England, the *Teachers' International Professional Development* (TIPD) programme funded by the DfES, provides opportunities for teachers to experience best practice in international education by participating in short-term study visits to other countries, to develop their teaching skills. In addition to TIPD, there are many programmes offering international opportunities for teachers and schools such as: *The Global Gateway*, *British Council Education and Training Group* (ETG), *International Placements for School Leaders Programme*, *Fulbright UK/US Teacher Exchange*, *Anglo-Russian Programme* and many more other programmes.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> The Masters of Teaching is introduced in England for teachers to qualify for Chartered London Teacher status (CLT).

<sup>26</sup> Department for Education and skills (DfES), 2005, *Understanding ourselves better by studying others* [online]. Available: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/> [5 June 2006]. Last accessed [23 July 2006].

In Kuwait, the government does not have financial constraints on sending their teachers abroad. The problem would be the difficulties to send the female teachers who are mainly suburban.

In addition, the colleges could launch a TV channel for teachers. In England a TV channel for teachers was launched in 2005. The channel is editorially independent and aims to reflect the views of the teaching community. It offers the unique opportunity to see inside other classrooms and gain an insight into how other schools are managed. The programmes are aimed at both new and experienced primary and secondary teachers, and there are also programmes and resources for heads, managers, governors, teaching assistants and support staff. There is information on continuing professional development, as well as general education interest programmes, including weekly news round up and documentaries, and debates about the current issues in education. Curriculum-based programmes for use in the classroom also form part of the programming schedule. The channel is delivered by a group, Education Digital, which is made up of education and media specialists: Brook Lapping Productions, ITV plc, and the Institute of Education, and funded by the DfES, whose involvement is limited to setting educational objectives for the channel so that it meets the needs of the teaching profession.

In Kuwait, the Ministry of Media, the Ministry of Education, and the teachers' institutions could cooperate to form such a channel, with special focus on the vocational elements, where teachers are presented as educators and parental figures for the children of Kuwait. Those images of teachers would bring back the positive sentiment that the public used to have for teachers. This channel could also enhance teachers' knowledge and skills, especially in a relaxed society where people would not bother to seek further professional development but would watch the channel.

So far, we have elucidated ways of improving the teacher education programmes in order to improve the status of teachers. As the situation stands in Kuwait, we cannot increase entry scores to get more quality inputs, but we can improve the status of teacher education by improving the outcomes. Moreover, the development of teacher education should start with a recommendation by the majority of the student teachers, which is by improving the actual college buildings. This improvement could dramatically improve the status of teacher education in such a society. This may

seem like an unsophisticated idea. Yet in such a status-conscious society it could work.

## **Conclusion**

Kuwaiti society attaches a massive importance to professional status. This study emphasises that improving the status of teachers in Kuwait should start from teacher education. Improving the status of teacher education should start with what seems a superficial adjustment by improving the buildings. Then we should dramatically improve the curriculum. Adopting a scientific approach to teaching in order to improve the curriculum may seem naïve, but if the knowledge that teachers are expected to acquire suffers from low status or is erroneously presumed to suit the simpleminded, attracting the most talented students into teaching will be difficult. Lecturers must play a part in increasing the morale and enhancing the sense of vocation of the student-teachers. A progressive strategy would emphasize the common purposes and commitments to education that we must build in a democracy, and would place these directly in the public domain and the schools, not just within the professional associations of an occupational elite.<sup>27</sup>

Teachers in Kuwait do not realise the crucial role that they play in people's lives. Teachers must recognise their importance and take pride in that for the profession to be transformed. There is more research that could be done on this topic. This study has been mainly quantitative, but it has laid the ground for further research. That further research could include the 'thicker' analyses of qualitative studies such as I attempted in my one case-study. What this study has already clearly shown is that there is a problem of teacher status in Kuwait and that this problem is related to aspects of teacher education. It may be useful for the Government to look at suggestions I have made earlier in this chapter. It would be a mistake to carry on with the present systems and structures, especially since some of my recommendations would not be difficult to implement.

---

<sup>27</sup> Burbules, N. & Densmore, J., 1991, *The limits of making teaching a profession. Education Policy*, 5 (1): 44-63.



## Bibliography

- Abbott-Chapman, J., Hull, R., MacLean, R., McCann, H., & Wyld, C. (1991). *Students' Images of Teaching: Factors Affecting Recruitment*. Commissioned Report 8: National Board of Employment, Education and Training, Centre for education, University of Tasmania, Tasmanian Teachers' Federation.
- Abercrombie, N., Hill, S., Turner, B.S. (2000). *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology*: Penguin (4 ed.). London, UK: Penguin Books.
- Adams, C. (2003). *Annual report and accounts, 2002/03*. General Teaching Council of England.
- Al abrashi (n.d). *Islamic Education and its philosophers*. Cairo: Dar Alfekr (in Arabic).
- Al-Misnad, S. (1985). *The development of Modern Education in the Gulf*. London: Ithaca press.
- Al-Mughni, H. (2001). *Women in Kuwait: All roads lead to the franchise, The Politics of Gender*. London: Saqi Books.
- Apple, M. W. (1985). Teaching and women's work: A comparative historical and ideological analysis. *Teachers College Record*, (86), 445-473.
- Apple, M. (1986). *Teacher and texts: a political economy of class gender relation in education*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Apple, M. (1995). *Education and power* (2 ed.). New York: Routledge.
- ATL (1993). *Final year undergraduates' attitude to teaching as a career*. BMRB International Ltd.
- Bagnall, D. (1995). Crisis in the Classroom. *The Bulletin*, (116), 38-41.
- Baker, M. (2000). *Does education get the media it deserves? Role of the media*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Ball, D.L. (1988). *Unlearning to teach mathematics. For the learning of mathematics*. East Lansing: Michigan State University, National Center for Research on Teacher Education. Issue Paper 88-1.
- Ball, S. (1991). *Power Conflict and Micropolitics: Doing Educational Research*. London: Routledge.
- Ball, S.J. (1987). *The micro-politics of the school: towards a theory of school organization*. London: Methuen.
- Ball, S.J. (1990). *Politics and Policy Making in Education: Exploration in Policy Sociology*. London: Routledge.

- Beare, H. (1992). What does it mean to be a professional? A commentary about teacher professionalism. *Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Education*, 18 (4), 65-72.
- Beilharz, P. (1992). Fabianism and Marxism: *Sociology and Political Economy*. *Australian Journal Of Political Science*, 27, 137-146.
- Bennett, N., & Turner-Bisset, N. (1993). Case studies in learning to teach, Cited by Goulding, M., Rowland, T., & Barber, P. (2002). Does it Matter? Primary Teacher Trainees' Subject Knowledge in Mathematics. *British Educational Journal*, 28, (5).
- Berger, P. and Luckmann, T. (1967). *Social construction of reality*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Berkeley, G. (1991). Teacher Quality: *Why the fuss?* *Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Education*, 17 (1), 19-23.
- Berrill, M. (1994). ITE Crossroads or by-pass? *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 24(1), 113-115.
- Bett, M. (1999). *Independent review of higher education pay and conditions: report of the committee*. London: Stationery Office.
- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, JC. (1977). *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. London: Sage
- Bowe, R., & Ball, S.J. (1992). *Reforming Education and Changing Schools: Case studies in policy sociology*. London: Routledge.
- Brady, K. (1998). Teaching as women's work? Teaching and Teachers' Work: A Publication on Professional and Pedagogical Issues. *Adelaide: Flinders University of South Australia*, 6 (4), 1-12.
- Briks, J.S., & Rimmer, J.A. (1984). *Developing education system in Oil States of Arabia: Conflicts of purpose and focus*. London: Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham.
- Broadfoot, P. (1979). *Assessment, schools and society: Contemporary Sociology of the school*. USA: Methuen co.
- Budge, D. (1999). Women lead in headship stakes. *Times Educational Supplement* p. 1.
- Burbules, N. (1993). *Dialogue in Teaching*. New York/London: Teacher College Press.
- Burbules, N., & Densmore, J. (1991). The limits of making teaching a profession. *Education Policy*, 5 (1), 44-63.
- Burrow, S. (1994). Research and development as an essential work practice for teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 19 (1), 4-8.

- Castle, E. (1969). *The teacher*. Oxford: OUP.
- Cavusgil, S., & Das, A. (1997). Methodological issues in empirical cross-cultural research: A survey of the management literature and a framework. *Management International Review*, 37 (1), 71-96.
- Chadbourne, R. (1992). Managing Change in Schools: A Western Australian Experience. *Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Education*, 18(4), 52-64.
- Cochrane, A. (1998). Illusions of power: Interviewing local elites. *Environment and Planning*, 30 (12), 2121-2132.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research Methods in Education* (4 ed.). London: Routledge.
- Connell, R.W., Ashenden, D., Kessler, S., & Dowsett, G. (1982). *Making the Difference: Schools, families and social division*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Connell, R.W. (1991). The Workforce of Reform: Teachers in the Disadvantaged Schools Program. *Australian Journal of Education*, 35(3), 229-246.
- Cooper, P., & McIntyre, D. (1996). *Effective Teaching and learning: Teachers' and students' perspectives*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Court, G., Morris, S., Reilly, B., & Williams, M. (1995). *Teachers: Recruitment and the labour market*. Brighton: Institute for Employment Studies.
- Czudnowski, M.M. (1987). Interviewing political elites in Taiwan. In G. Moyser & M. Wagstaffe (Eds.), *Research methods for elite studies*. London: Allen & Unwin: 232-250.
- Dall'Alba, G. (1990). 'Foreshadowing conceptions of teaching'. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia, Griffith University, Brisbane.
- Davidson, J. (1970). *Outdoor Recreation Surveys: The Design and Use of Questionnaires for Site Surveys*. Countryside commission, London.
- Day, C., Calderhead, J., & Denicolo, P. (1993). *Research on Teacher Thinking: Understanding professional development*. London: Falmer Press.
- Day, R. (2005). *Great School Program, Wisconsin Public Opinion Research*. Summary Report, Evanston, IL.
- De Vaus, D.A. (1996). *Surveys in Social Research* (4 ed.). London, UCL Press.
- Derr, C.E., Groundwater-Smith, S., Meyeen, R., & Parker, J. (1995). Politics of teacher education in New South Wales, Australia. In M.Ginsberg & B.Lindsay (Eds.), *The political dimension in teacher education: comparative*



- perspectives on policy formation, socialization and society*. London: The Falmer Press
- Denzin, N. (1970). *The research act*. Chicago: Aldine
- Denzin, N.K. (2003). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry (2 ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, London: SAGE.
- Department of Education and Employment (1997). *Teaching, High status, High Standards: Curricular 10/97* (London, HMSO).
- Department of Education and Employment (1998). *Teaching, High status, High Standards. Curricular 4/98* (London, HMSO).
- Devancy, K., & Sykes, G. (1988). *Making the case for professionalism*. London: Falmer Press.
- Dobbins, R. (1995). *The challenge of developing a 'reflective practicum'*. Paper presented at the 25th Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Sydney.
- Dolton, P.J., and Makepeace, G.H. (1993). Female labor force participation and the choice of occupation: The supply of teachers. *European Economic Review*, 37, 1393-1411.
- Dolye, W. (1990). Classroom Knowledge as a foundation for teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 91(3), 347-360.
- Doyle, W. (1984). How order is achieved in classrooms: an interim report. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 16(3), 259-277
- Donnelly, J. (2002). *Science and Mathematics Undergraduates' Attitudes to Secondary School Teaching as a career*. Final Report, CSSME, School of Education, University of Leeds.
- Drever, E. (1995). *Using Semi-structured Interviews in Small-scale Research: A Teachers' Guide*. Edinburgh: Scottish Council for Research in Education.
- Dunkin, M.J. (1987). The technical skills of teaching, in: *M.J. Dunkin the international Encyclopedia of teaching and teacher education*, Sydney Pergamon press, 703-706.
- Dunkin, M.J. (1990). The induction of academic staff to a university: Processes and products. *Higher Education*, 20, 47-66.
- Durbridge, R. (1991). Restructuring in the schools sector. *Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Education*, 17(2), 85-90.
- Elam, S., & Gallup, A. (1990). The 22nd Gallup poll of the public's attitudes towards their Public Schools, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 72(1), 51.
- Eltis, K., & Turney, C. (1993). Defining generic competencies for beginning teachers. *Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Education*, 19(3), 24-36.

- Eltis, K.J., & Laws, K.J. (1993). *The Development of Strategic Management Plans*. Sydney: NSW Department of School education, Metropolitan West region.
- Eltis, K.J. (1987). *Australian teacher education in review*. Bedford Park: South Pacific Association for Teacher Education.
- Eltis, K.J., Meyenn, B., & Parker, J. (1993). *A pod of middle aged beached whales: critics and criticisms of teacher education*. Australian Association for Research in Education Annual Conference, Fremantle.
- Erikson, R, & Golgthorpe, J. (1992). *The constant flux: a study of class mobility in industrial societies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Etzioni, A. (1969). *The semi-professions and their organization: Teachers, nurses, social workers*. New York: Free P, London, Collier-Macmillan.
- Fielding, N., & Schreier, M., (2001). Introduction: On the compatibility between qualitative and quantitative research methods. *Qualitative social research*, (2)1.
- Findlay, J.J. (1907). *The school and the child; being selections from the educational essays of John Dewey*. London: Blackie & Sons.
- Fitz, J., & Halpin, D. (1995). *Brief encounters: Researching education policy-making in elite settings*. Avebury: Aldershot: 65-86.
- Flick, Uwe. (1998). *an introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Flores, J. G. (1995). Using focus groups in educational research: Exploring teachers' perspectives on educational change. *Evaluation Review*, 19(1), 84-101.
- Fullan, M. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change*. London: Cassell.
- Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform*. Washington: The Falmer Press.
- Furlong, J. (1994). Another view from the crossroads. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 24 (1), 117-121.
- Gamarnikow, E., Morgan, D., Purvis J., & Taylorson, D. (eds.), (1983). *The Public and the private*. London: Heinemann.
- Gamarnikow, E., & Green, T. (1999). The third way and social capital: Education action zones and a new agenda in education, parents and community. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 9 (1), 3-21.
- Gay, L. R., & Airasian, P., (2000). *Educational research: competencies for analysis and application*, (6 ed.). Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *The consequences of modernity*. Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: psychological theory and women's development*, Cambridge. MA: Harvard University Press.

- Ginsberg, M., & Lindsay, B. (eds.) (1995). *The political dimension in teacher education: comparative perspectives on policy formation, socialization and society*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Godstein, H. (1995). *Multilevel statistical models*. London, Edward Arnold; New York: Halstead Press.
- Gore, J. (1995). *Emerging issues in teacher education*. Murdoch: Innovative Links Project. NPDP.
- Goulding, M., Rowland, T., & Barber, P. (2002) Does it matter? Primary teacher Trainees' Subject Knowledge in Mathematics. *British Educational Research Journal*, 28(5), 689-705.
- Grace, G. (1987). *Teachers and the state in Britain: A changing relationship*. London: Falmer Press.
- Groundwater-Smith, S., Parker, J., & Arthur, M. (1994). Partnerships: Beyond Consultation. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 19(1), 9-14.
- Grundy, S., & Hatton, E. (1995). Teacher educators' ideological discourses. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 21 (1), 7-24.
- Grundy, S. (1996). Building professional research partnerships: Possibilities and perplexities. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 23 (1), 1-15.
- Grumet, M.R. (1988). *Bitter milk: Woman and teaching*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts.
- Haraway, D. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature*. London: Free Association Books.
- Hacker, A. (1999). The unmaking of men. *New York Review of Books*, 66(16), 25-30.
- Hargreaves, A. (1984). Experience counts, theory doesn't: How teachers talk about their work. *Sociology of Education*. 57, 244-254.
- Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing Teachers, Changing Times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*. London: Cassell.
- Hargreaves, A., & Dawe, R. (1990). 'Paths of Professional Development: Contrived Collegiality, Collaborative Culture and the Case of Peer Coaching'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 6, 227-241.
- Hargreaves, A., & Goodson, I. (1996). *Teachers' Professional Lives: Aspiration and Actualities*. London: Falmer Press.
- Hargreaves, D. (1989). *Planning for School Development: Advice to governors, head teachers and teachers*. London: Department of Education and Science.
- Hargreaves, D. H. (1994). The new professionalism: the synthesis of professional and institutional development. *Teaching and teacher Education*, 10 (4), 423-438.



- Harlen, W. (1978). *Evaluation and the teacher's role*; Schools council research studies. London: Macmillan education Ltd.
- Hatton, E. (1994). Work experience as a solution to the problems of relevance and credibility in teacher education. *Australian Journal of education*, 38 (1), 9-35.
- Hertz, R., & Jonathan B. Imber. (1993). Fieldwork in elite settings: Introduction. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22 (1), 3-6.
- HESA (2001). *First destination of students leaving higher education institutions, 1999/00*. Cheltenham: HESA.
- Hindess, B. (1977). *The Concept of Class in Marxist Theory and Marxist Politics*. University of London.
- Holmes, S. (1993). *Teaching Life: Views from classrooms across Australia*. Toowoomba: Australian Council of Education Centres.
- House, E.R. (1978). Technology versus craft: a ten year perspective on innovation, in Taylor, P.H. (ed) *New Directions in Curriculum Studies*, Falmer Press.
- Hunter, A. (1993). Local knowledge and local power: Notes on the ethnography of local community elites. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22 (1), 36-58.
- ILO (1998). *Preliminary study on the relationship between the feminization of the teaching profession and the evolution of teachers' salaries and conditions of work in OECD countries, 1980-95*.
- ILO-UNESCO, (2004). *More children, fewer teachers: Study sees global teacher shortage causing decline in quality education*. Press release 2002-67.
- Kanter, R.M., (1977). *Men and women of this corporation*. New York: Basics books, INC., Publishers.
- Kaplan, G. (1990). TV's version of Education. *Phi Delta, Kappa*, 71 (5), 40-47.
- Kelly, L., Regan, L., & Burton, S. (1992). 'Defending the indefensible? Quantitative methods and feminist research'. In Hinds, H., Phoenix, A., and Stacey, J., (eds.), *Working Out: New Directions for Women's Studies*. London: Falmer Press.
- Kember, D., & Gow, L. (1994). Orientations to teaching and their effect on the quality of student learning. *Journal of Higher Education*, 65, 59-74.
- Kristianasen, W. (2003). The Islamists, the biggest parliamentary force in Kuwait, are worried. Some of their members were involved in the attacks of 11 September; more have had their fund-raising activities questioned and even shut down. Will they stay in this unwelcome and uncomfortable spotlight? *Mondediplo (French journal)*.

- Knight, J. (1994). *Beyond the stable state? Teacher education for the twenty-first century*, Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Teacher Education Association, Brisbane.
- Kreuger, R. A. (1988). *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research*. London: Sage.
- Krueger, R.A., & Casey, M. (2000). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Lawn, M., & Green, G. (1987). *Teachers: The culture and politics of work*. London: Falmer Press.
- Little, J.W. (1990). The persistence of privacy: Autonomy and initiative in teachers' professional relationship. *Teachers College Record*, 91, 509-536.
- Lortie, D. (1975). *School Teachers*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Longan, T. (1984). *Learning through Interviewing: Pupil perspectives*. London: Croom Helm.
- Matthew, M., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2 ed.). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Marland, P.W. (1986). Models of teachers' interactive thinking. *Elementary school journal*, 87(2), 209-226.
- Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative researching*. London: Sage Publications.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- McDowell, L. (1998). Elites in the city of London: Some methodological considerations. *Environment and Planning*, 30 (12), 2133-2146.
- Mc Nergney, R.F., & Herbert, J.M. (1995). *Foundations of Education: the challenge of professional Education*. Boston: Allan & Bacon.
- McRobbie, Angela (1982). The politics of feminist research: Between talk, text and action. *Feminist Review*, 12, 46-57.
- Mc William, E., & Kirk, D. (1993). First year oust: Graduate unemployment and initial teacher education. *Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Education*, 19(3), 59-64.
- Meier, D. (1992). Reinventing Teaching. *Teachers College Record*, 93(4), 594-609.
- Merton, R.K., & Kendall, P.L. (1946). The focused interview. *American Journal of Sociology*, (51), 541-557.
- Miller, J. (1992). *More has meant women: The feminization of schooling*. London: Institute of Education, University of London, Tufnell.
- Ministry of Education (1998). *Kuwait statistics* (in Arabic).

- Ministry of Education (2001). *The statistic dairy, 2000/2001 Kuwait*, Planning Department, Environmental Changes Follow- UP Supervision.
- Ministry of Education (2006). *The statistic dairy, 2005/2006 Kuwait*, Planning Department, Environmental Changes Follow- UP Supervision.
- Ministry of education (2003). *Kuwait statistics*.
- Ministry of Education, *1995-96 report*, Department of Research, Kuwait.
- Ministry of Education, *2004-05 report*, Department of Research, Kuwait.
- Morley, L. (1997). Change and Equity in higher Education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 18(2), 229- 240.
- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research* (2 ed.). London: Sage.
- Morgan, D.L., & Kreuger R.A. (1993). *When to use focus groups and why: successful focus groups*. London: Sage
- Morgan, P. (1996). *Finding No. 2893*. Published in The Bulletin, April 30.
- Morris, E. (2001). *Professionalism and trust: The future of teachers and teaching*. London: DfES/Social Market Foundation.
- Mursi, M.M. (1990). *The education in the Arab Gulf states*. Doha: University of Qatar, Education Research Centre, 28.
- Murnane, R.J., Singer, J.D., Willett, J.B., Kemple, J.J., & Olsen, R.J. (1991). *Who Will Teach? Policies that Matter*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Murray, K. & MacDonald, R. (1997). The disjunction between lecturers' conception of teaching and their claimed educational practice. *Higher Education*, 33(3), 331- 49.
- National Board of Employment Education and Training (NBEET) (1991). *Student images of teaching: factors affecting recruitment*. Canberra: AGPS.
- National Commission of Education (1993). *Learning to succeed: a radical look at education today and a strategy for the future*. London: Heinemann.
- NEA Research (2003). *American Public School Teacher 2000-2001*, National Education Association, Great Public School for Every Child, Washington, D.C.
- NPQTL (1993). *Report of the national conference on options for a national framework for teachers' qualifications and professional standards*, DEET: Canberra
- NSW Ministry of Education, Youth and Woman's Affairs (1990). *Teacher education: directions and strategies*. Sydney: Author.
- NSWDSE (1990). *Teacher education, directions and strategies*, Sydney: NSW Ministry of Education, Youth and Women's Affairs



- OECD (1997). *The concentration of women's employment and relative occupational pay: a statistical framework for comparative analysis*. Labour market and social policy Occasional Papers, No. 26. Paris.
- OECD (1999). *The future of female-dominated occupations*. Paris: Author.
- OECD (1998). *Key data on education in the European Union*, citing the European Commission's 1996 report.
- OECD (1999). *Education at a glance: Indicators 1998*. Paris: Author.
- OECD (1990). *The Teacher Today*, Paris.
- Oppenheim, A.N. (1992). *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement*. London: Printer
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1989). *The quality of schools*, Paris: OECD.
- Ostrander, A. (1993). Surely you're not in this just to be helpful: Access, rapport, and interviews in three studies of elites. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 22 (1), 7-27.
- Pakulski, J., & Waters, M. (1996). *The Death of Class*. London: Sage.
- Peabody, R.L. (1990). Interviewing political elites. *Political Science and Politics*, 23 (3), 451-455.
- Polanyi, K. (1973). *The Great Transformation*. Octagon Books, New York.
- Porter, P. (1990). The Crisis in the Teaching Profession: the Importance of Excellence and Equity. *Unicorn: Journal of the Australian College of Education*, 16(3), 148-155.
- Powney, J. & Watts, M. (1987). *Interviewing in Educational Research*. London: Kogan Page Ltd.
- Preston, B. (1992). *Teacher supply and demand: Some issues for the coming decade*. Commissioned paper for the Australian Council of Deans of Education.
- Preston, C. (2000). *Society and Culture Inservice*, Nagle College.
- Punch, K.F. (1998). *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: Sage.
- Queensland Board of Teacher Registration (1996). *Making Your Professional Development Count*. Brisbane: Report of the Queensland Consortium for Professional Development in Education.
- Ramazanoglu, C. (1992). On feminist methodology: Male reason versus female empowerment. *Sociology*, 26(2), 207-212.
- Rich, J.M. (1994). *Professional ethics in education*. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.

- Richards, D. (1996). Elite interviewing: approaches and pitfalls. *Politics*, 16 (3), 199-204.
- Robin, R. H., & Zahn, L. (2001). *Attrition of new teachers among recent College graduates*, National Center for Education Statistics. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement NCES 2001-189.
- Rowan, B. (1994). Comparing teachers' work with work in other occupations: Notes on the professional status of teaching. *Education Researcher*, 23 (6), 4-17, 21.
- Rudduck, J. (1995). It's not labour and it's not play: teaching and learning in secondary schools. *The Curriculum Journal*, 2 (2), 125-135.
- Salkind, N.J. (2000). *Exploring Research* (4 ed.). New Jersey, Prentice Hall
- Salomon, G. & Globerson, T. (1989). When teams do not function the way they ought to. *International journal of Educational research*, 13 (1), 89-100.
- Samuluelowicz, K., & Bain, J.D. (1992). Conceptions of teaching held by academic teachers. *Higher Education*, 24(1), 93-111.
- Sarantakos, S. (1998). *Social Research* (2 ed.). London: Macmillan Press.
- Schon, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. London: Temple Smith.
- Schön, D.A. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Schools Council (1990). *Australia's teachers: an agenda for the next decade*. Canberra: Australian Government Public Service (AGPS).
- Scott, B. (1990). *School-Centred Education, Building a more responsive state education system*. Management Review, Milsons point: NSW Education Portfolio.
- Scott, D. (1995). *Methods and Data in Educational Research*. Core Open Learning Unit, University of Southampton.
- Selfe, C.L. (1985). *An apprehensive writer composes, when a writer can't write: studies in writers block and other composing-process problems*, New York: The Guilford Press.
- Sennett, R., & Cobb, J. (1972). *The Hidden Injuries of class*. New York: Vintage.
- Shank, G. (1994). Shaping qualitative research in educational psychology. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 19, 340-35.
- Shulman, L.S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: foundation of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57 (1), 1-22.

- Shulman, L.S. (1986). Those who understand: knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15(2), 4-14.
- Sieber, S. (1979). The integration of fieldwork and survey methods. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1335-1359.
- Smithers, A., & Robinson, P. (2001). *Teachers leaving*, London: NUT, Liverpool: CEER, University of Liverpool.
- Stewart, D.W., & Shamdasani, P. N. (1992). *Focus groups: theory and practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Simpson, T. (1997). *Diversity, Difference and Discontinuity: Remapping Teacher Education for the Next Decade, The Public Perception of Teachers: A Different Projection*. Paper presented at the Australian Teacher Education Association Conference.
- Simpson, T. (2002). *The Public Perception of Teachers: A Different Projection*. QUT Kelvin Grove Campus.
- Soder, R. (1990). *The rhetoric of teacher professionalization*. San Francisco: Josser-Bass.
- Sockett, H. (1987). Has Shulman got the strategy right? *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(2), 208-221.
- Soleman, M. (1991). *Class Teaching in the Gulf Countries*, Bahrain (in Arabic)
- Spear M., Gould, K., & Lee B. (2000). *Who would be a teacher? A review of factors motivating and demotivating prospective and practising teachers*. Slough, NFER.
- Swetman, L.A. (1992). Media distortion of the teacher image. *The Clearinghouse*, 66 (1), 30-32.
- Taheri, A. (2003). *Dimming the Kuwait city lights, Kuwait return to their tribal roots*. National Review.
- Taylor, S.J., & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Trigwell, K., & Prosser, M. (1996). Changing approaches to teaching: a relational perspective. *Studies in Higher Education*, 21(3), 275-84.
- Turney, C., & Wright, R. (1990). *Where the buck stops: the teacher educators*. Sydney: Sydmac Academic Press.
- Waddell, N., & Hallgarten, J. (2001). Transforming Teacher status. Conference Report, GTC.
- Walker, J.C. (1993). Supply and demand in teaching and implications for teacher education. *Unicorn*, 19 (4), 89-91.



- Walker, J.C. (1996). *How to improve the quality of teaching in tomorrow's schools: the Contribution of Research*. NSW Teacher Education Council.
- Waller, W. (1932). The sociology of education, cited in Hargreaves, A., & Goodson, I. (1996). *Teachers' Professional lives: aspiration and actualities*, London: Falmer Press.
- Walsh, P. (1993). *Education and meaning: Philosophy in practice*. London: Cassell.
- Watkins, P. (1993). Work, skill and teachers. *Unicorn*, 19(3), 65-74.
- Weber, M. (1958). *Class, status and party: essays in sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Weinstein, C.S. (1989). Teacher's education students' preconceptions of teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 40 (2), 53- 60.
- Whitty, G., Barrett, E., Barton, L., Furlong, J., Galvin, C., & Miles, S. (1992). Initial teacher education in England and Wales: a survey of current practice and concerns (Modes of Teacher Education Project). *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 22, 293-306.
- Wood, R. (1991). *Assessment and testing: a survey of research*. Cambridge: University press.
- Wright, E.O. (1997). *Class counts: comparative studies in class analysis*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Wright, E.O. (1985). *Classes*. London: Verso
- Wright, E.O. (1990). *The Debate of classes*. London: Verso
- Wylie, C. (1998). *Principal appointments*. Wellington: Report for the New Zealand Principals'.
- Wylie, C. (2000). *Trends in feminisation of the teaching profession in OECD countries 1980-95*. New Zealand Council for Educational Research, International Labour Office, Geneva.
- Yeatman, A., & Sachs, J. (1995). *Making the links: a formative evaluation of the first year of the innovative links project between universities and schools for teacher professional development*. Murdoch: Innovative Links Project.

#### **Internet based materials**

- Al-Mubailesh, k., *A complete guide to Kuwait on your desk*, [online], Available: <http://www.kuwaitiah.net/religion1.html> [7 April 2005]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].
- Encarta. 2002. *Encyclopedia: Kuwait Geography, Demographics, and Resources*. [Online],

- Available:[http://www.countriesquest.com/middle\\_east/kuwait/the\\_people\\_of\\_kuwait.htm](http://www.countriesquest.com/middle_east/kuwait/the_people_of_kuwait.htm) [5 March 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].
- Centre of information systems, Kuwait University. 2006. *Kuwait university in brief*. [Online, Available: <http://www.Kuniv.edu/> [9 January 2006]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].
- Cupchik, G. (2001). *Constructivist realism: An ontology that encompasses positivist and constructivist approaches to the social sciences*. Forum: Qualitative Social Research, [On-line Journal], 2(1). Available: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-01/1-01cupchik-e.htm> [12 December 2005]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].
- Department for Education and skills (DfES) (2005). *Understanding ourselves better by studying others* [online]. Available: '<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/> [5 June 2006]. Last accessed [23 July 2006].
- European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE). (1996). *the feminization of the teaching profession*, Brussels [online], Available: [http://www.teachers.org.uk/resources/pdf/kp\\_b&gachiv.pdf](http://www.teachers.org.uk/resources/pdf/kp_b&gachiv.pdf) [17 JULY 2003]. Last accessed [19 July 2006].
- Information and computer centre, PAAET. 2003. [Online], Available: <http://www.Paaet.edu.kw/> [11 June 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].
- Kuwait information office. *Culture*. [Online], Available: [Kuwait-info.org/](http://Kuwait-info.org/), [10 march 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].
- Kuwait information office. *Education*. [online], Available: [Kuwait-info.org/](http://Kuwait-info.org/), [10 march 2004]. Last accessed [16 July 2006].
- Ministry of Education, Kuwait, The schools, [online]. Available: <http://www.moe.edu.kw/> [25 may 2005]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].
- Skrivet av., Skrivet. (2004). Elite interviewing, advantages and limitations within political research [online]. Available: <http://www.mimersbrunn.se/arbeten/5935.asp> [5 April 2005]. Last accessed [17 July 2006].
- Westmarland, N., (2001). *The quantitative/qualitative debate and feminist research: A Subjective View of Objectivity*. [ online] Available: [http://www. Qaualitive-reseach.net/fqs;texte/1-01](http://www.Qaualitive-reseach.net/fqs;texte/1-01).

## Appendix A: Public Questionnaire

<b>Age between:</b>				
10-17	18-22	23-35	36-50	51-65
65+				
<b>Sex:</b> male      female				
<b>Relationship with student</b> _____				
<b>Are you a parent?</b>			Yes	No
<b>Are you a grandparent?</b>			Yes	No

To what extent you agree with the following statements?

- Kuwaitis respect teachers  
☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly disagree
  
- The College of Basic Education has low status  
☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly disagree
  
- The Education College has higher status than the College of Basic Education  
☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly disagree
  
- Teachers deserve to have better status  
☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly disagree
  
- Foreign teachers are more knowledgeable and dedicated than Kuwaiti teachers.  
☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly disagree
  
- Teachers in Kuwait do  
☐ Excellent job      ☐ Acceptable job      ☐ Poor job
  
- Status of teachers in Kuwait is  
☐ High      ☐ Medium      ☐ Low
  
- The level (standard) of the educational system in Kuwait is declining  
☐ Strongly agree      ☐ Agree      ☐ Disagree      ☐ Strongly disagree
  
- The main educational problem in Kuwait nowadays is  
☐ Quality of teachers      ☐ The curriculum  
☐ Teaching methods      ☐ Students' motivation
  
- The main reason for Kuwaitis to become teachers is  
☐ Salary      ☐ Easy to become a teacher  
☐ Holidays      ☐ Love teaching children



## Appendix B: School-leaver Questionnaire

### A. General information

- Sex
  - Male ☐
  - Female ☐
- Specialist subject
  - Humanities ☐
  - Science ☐
- What is your latest GPA or year score?    A ☐    B ☐    C ☐    D ☐

### B. Occupational intention

1. Are you planning to enter Higher Education?    Yes ☐    no ☐    undecided ☐
2. If yes, which career (s) are you considering?.....
3. Did you consider becoming a teacher?    Yes ☐    no ☐    undecided ☐

### C. Influences on attitudes toward teaching as a career

If you consider becoming a teacher how important are the following influences in making your decision (if you do not consider becoming a teacher, go to Q.16)

	No importance		some importance		most important
4. Good teaching you experienced as a pupil	1	2	3	4	5
5. Poor teaching you experienced as a pupil	1	2	3	4	5
6. Interest in continuing to work with your subject	1	2	3	4	5
7. Interest in working with children	1	2	3	4	5
8. How well school terms would fit with being a parent	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teachers salary	1	2	3	4	5
10. Teachers' working conditions	1	2	3	4	5

	No importance	some importance	most important		
11. Students behavior	1	2	3	4	5
12. Your perception of other careers	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers' likely career progression	1	2	3	4	5
14. Teachers' likely job security	1	2	3	4	5

**15. If you consider becoming a teacher what is your most important reason (please tick one)?**

Salary ☐ Workload ☐ Holidays ☐ Career progression ☐  
 Gender-divided job ☐ Prestige ☐ Challenging ☐ Easy to get a job ☐  
 Easy to become a teacher ☐

**16. If you do not consider becoming a teacher what is your most important reason (please tick one)?**

Salary ☐ Work load ☐ Lack of autonomy ☐ Career progression ☐  
 Gender-divided job ☐ Lack of Prestige ☐ Not challenging ☐

#### D. Public perceptions on teacher status

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree
17. Teaching is uninteresting job but it pays well.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
18. Teachers status is low in comparison with other university graduate occupations.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
19. If teachers had higher status more people would consider it as a career.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
20. The College of Basic Education has high status.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
21. Academically able students in the school most likely enter Teacher Education.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
22. Teachers have the same prestige like other university graduate occupations.	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

23. What is the most honorable profession? State one

Teachers	Doctors	Clerics	Lawyers	Police officers	Politicians	Nurse	Others
----------	---------	---------	---------	-----------------	-------------	-------	--------

24. What is the most prestigious profession? State one

Teachers	Doctors	Clerics	Lawyers	Police officers	Politicians	Nurse	Others
----------	---------	---------	---------	-----------------	-------------	-------	--------

25. Are teachers appreciated in this country?

Yes	Not much	Don't know	No
-----	----------	------------	----

26. Do you believe that teaching require a special skills and expertise?

Yes	Not much	Don't know	No
-----	----------	------------	----

27. On a scale of 1 to 10 where do teacher status stands in comparison with other university graduate occupations? (10 is the highest).

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

28. Why would you/ or wouldn't you want to be a teacher?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



## Appendix C: Teacher Questionnaire

### A. General information

- Are you a Primary ☐ Intermediate ☐ Secondary ☐ teacher?
- Your specialist subject/s is? -----
- Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐
- What year are you born? 19
- Your qualifications? BA ☐ Bachelor ☐ Diploma ☐ Others ☐
- Your nationality? Kuwait ☐ Non-Kuwaiti ☐
- Years of experience? .....
- How many hours of teaching do you have per week?

### B. Teachers' perceptions of their status

To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

	Strongly agree				Strongly disagree
1. Teaching is not very interesting job but it pays well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Teachers status is low in comparison with other occupations that require university education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. If teachers had higher status more people will consider it as a career.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Teacher College of basic education Kuwait has high status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Teacher College in Kuwait has high status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Academically able students in the school most likely to inter College of Basic Education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Academically able students in the school most likely to inter Education College.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Teachers are not honored now as before.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Teachers have the same prestige like other university graduate occupations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Secondary teacher have better status than primary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Teachers are appreciated in this country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### C. Comparing with other professions

12. Do you believe that teaching require a special skills and expertise?

Yes	Not much	Don't know	No
-----	----------	------------	----

13. What is the most honorable profession? State 1,2,3

Teachers	Doctors	Clerics	Lawyers	Police officers	Politicians	Others
----------	---------	---------	---------	-----------------	-------------	--------

14. What is the most prestigious profession? State 1,2,3

Teachers	Doctors	Clerics	Lawyers	Police officers	Politicians	Others
----------	---------	---------	---------	-----------------	-------------	--------

### D. Perceptions of teacher education

Please indicate the extent to which you agree, or disagree, with each statement as follows:

- |  |
|--|
| 1. Certainly true<br>2. Probably true<br>3. Uncertain<br>4. Probably false<br>5. Certainly false |
|--|

15. The curriculum in Teacher College is adequate.	.....
16. The curriculum in Teacher College is challenging.	.....
17. Technology is introduced to our teaching methods.	.....
18. Although teacher status in low more people are interrering the profession.	.....
19. Teacher Education is the last option for 'A' or 'B' students.	.....
20. Teacher Education College has little prestige in Kuwait.	.....
21. If I have children I will encourage them to become teachers	.....

### E. Opportunities for professional status development

How can we enhance the status of teachers?

22. Giving professional and academic autonomy

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------

23. Selectivity

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------

24. More training for primary teachers

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------

25. More training for secondary teachers

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------

26. More female teachers

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------

27. Increasing salaries

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------

28. Good Teaching is the way to increase the status in Kuwait.

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------

29. As Teachers we are bothered by our image.

Yes	No	Perhaps	Don't know
-----	----	---------	------------



30. What attracts you the most to the profession? State 1,2,3

Salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prestige	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Load	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working under supervision.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holidays	<input type="checkbox"/>	Friendly working environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Single Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working with children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fits family life	<input type="checkbox"/>	Career Progression	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Challenging	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. What attracts you the least? State 1,2,3

Salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prestige	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Load	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working under supervision.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Unfriendly working environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Single Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working with children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fits family life	<input type="checkbox"/>	Career Progression	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Challenging	<input type="checkbox"/>

32. On a scale of 1 to 10 where do teacher status stands in comparison with other university graduate occupations? (10 is the highest).

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

33. Are you satisfied with your status as a teacher?

Of course Yes ☐

Yes ☐

Sometimes ☐

No ☐

Of course Not ☐

**34. In your opinion, how can we increase the status of teachers in Kuwait?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Appendix D: Student-teacher Questionnaire

### General information

- Gender      Male      Female
- Age      17-22      23-28      28+
- Parental status      Single      Married      Married with children
- Where do you live .....
- Which year are you?      First      Second      Third      Fourth
- Specialty .....

1. Why did you decide to enter this college?

Easy to get in      Single gender      Love children  
 Love teaching      Suits my situation      Other reason

If other reason state .....

2. How many times you needed to use the library since you entered the college?

Never      1-4 times      5-10 times      11+

3. How many essays you were required to do since you entered the college?

None      1-4      5-10      11+

4. Define the curriculum of the college; you can tick more than one box

Challenging      Easy      Traditional  
 Boring      Difficult      Progressive

5. How difficult is the curriculum in the college?

Very difficult      Difficult      Not difficult      Easy      Very easy

6. Did you repeat any module

No      Yes once      Yes lots of times

7. What is the most excellent characteristic in the college?

The curriculum      The teaching methods      The lecturers  
 The assessment style      none of the above, it is .....

8. How do you describe the type of students entering the College?

Religious      Liberal      Conservatives      Smart      dumb  
 all      wealthy      poor      Other, state.....



9. Do you like teaching?      Yes              No

10. What attracts you the most to the profession? State one

Salary	Prestige
Work Load	Working under supervision.
Holidays	Friendly working environment
Single Gender	Working with children
Fits family life	Career Progression
	Challenging

11. What attracts you the least? State one

Salary	Prestige
Work Load	Working under supervision.
Unfriendly working environment	
Single Gender	Working with children
Fits family life	Career Progression
	teaching

12. Kuwaitis respect teachers

Strongly agree disagree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly
----------------------------	-------	----------	----------	----------

13. The College of Basic Education has low status

Strongly agree disagree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly
----------------------------	-------	----------	----------	----------

14. Education College has higher status than College of Basic Education

Strongly agree disagree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly
----------------------------	-------	----------	----------	----------

15. Teachers' status is low in comparison with other university graduate occupations

Strongly agree disagree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly
----------------------------	-------	----------	----------	----------

16. Academically able students are likely to enter the College of Basic Education.

Strongly agree disagree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly
----------------------------	-------	----------	----------	----------

17. Graduate teachers have the same prestige like other university graduate occupations.

Strongly agree      Agree      Hesitant      Disagree      Strongly disagree

18. Teacher status varies from primary to secondary teachers.

Strongly agree      Agree      Hesitant      Disagree      Strongly disagree

19. Status of teachers in Kuwait is

High      Medium      Low

20. Do you believe that teachers require a special skills and expertise?

☐ Yes      ☐ Not much      ☐ Don't know      ☐ No

21. Are teachers well appreciated in this country?

☐ Yes      ☐ Not much      ☐ Don't know      ☐ No

**22. In your opinion, how can we raise the status of the college?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## **Appendix E. College Lecturer Interview Schedule**

- Type of students chooses to enter the college.
- The recruitment interview and the selectivity criteria.
- Describe the curriculum; challenging, easy, efficient, adequate, progressive.
- The status of teachers in Kuwait and its affect on the profession.
- The status of primary and secondary school teachers, if they differ, and why?
- Review of some of the surveys findings and discuss.

## **Appendix F: Student- teacher Group interviews Schedule**

- Becoming a teacher, views, reasons, cons and pros.
- The curriculum, views, cons and pro.
- The college recruitment, views, cons and pros.
- Gender issues within the profession.
- Review of some of the surveys findings and discuss.



## Appendix G: Elite Members Interview Schedule

### *Introductory for the discussion*

The aim of the interview is to reflect on the findings.

The tables demonstrate major results, which will be significant element of discussion.

There are some key works that characterize teaching; feminized profession, mass profession, static profession, children-related profession. Those elements, commonly, have an impact on forming the teachers' image. However, the extent of the affect can vary from country to another. Nevertheless, there are other factors that may affect the status of teachers, which do not characterize teaching as a profession but characterize the educational ideologies, which vary from each country; from your opinion, in Kuwait what factors shape teachers image.

The results of this table shows that 28% of the students want to become teachers. Mainly for its financial security, comment on the statement.

From the data there is a sense of appreciation to knowledge and intelligence and power which define 'status' from Kuwaitis point of views; Doctors and politicians are the most honored, and most recognized with high status. Teachers have lower status in comparison to other profession, yet high percentage of students desire to become teachers. What is the possible rationale behind it?

- As the majority of students considering teaching are suburban, it is ought to have an affect on teacher education. Comment?
- Why teachers in Kuwait do not look at their job as altruistic profession?
- From your opinion why the status of primary and secondary school teachers differ?

- To which extent the developments of teacher preparation institution enhance can teachers' status?
- In our society to which extent does teachers status affect the quality of teachers entering the profession?
- In such a society, what is the most applicable way to increase teacher status?
- What of the findings presented you find it surprising?
- Would you encourage your children to become teachers?

## H. Public Survey (Tables)

**Table 18A: College of Basic Education has low status  $\Rightarrow$  Education College has higher status %**

Education College has higher status College of Basic Education has low status	Agree	Disagree	Total
Agree	88%(2361)	12%(319)	100%
Disagree	62%(1417)	38%(879)	100%

\* This table is to be read horizontally

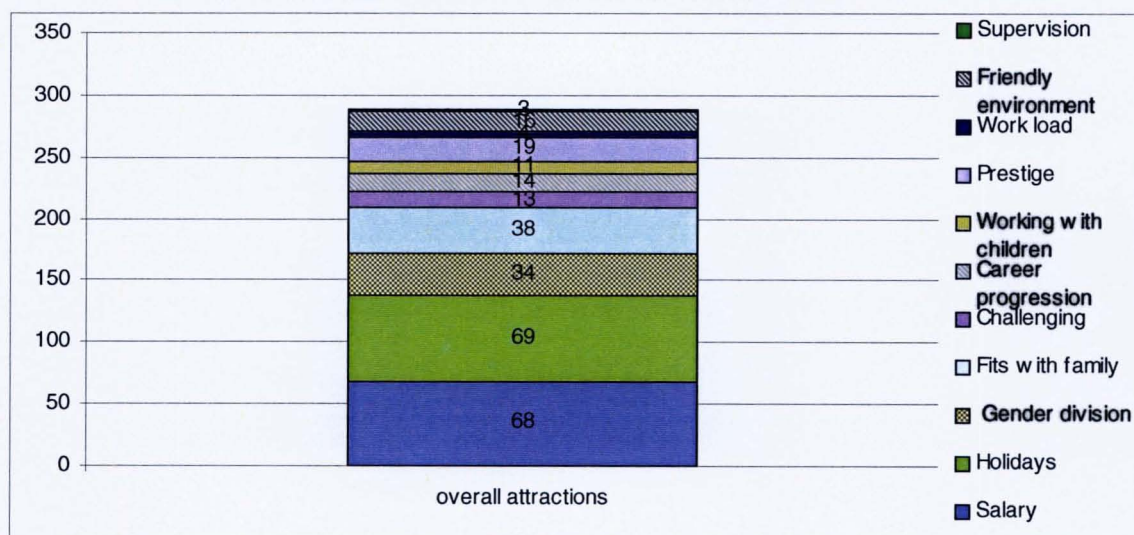
**Table 18B: Education College has higher status  $\Rightarrow$  College of Basic Education has low status %**

College of Basic Education has low status Education College has higher status	Agree	Disagree	Total
Agree	62%	38%(879)	100%
Disagree	27%	73%	100%

\* This table is to be read horizontally

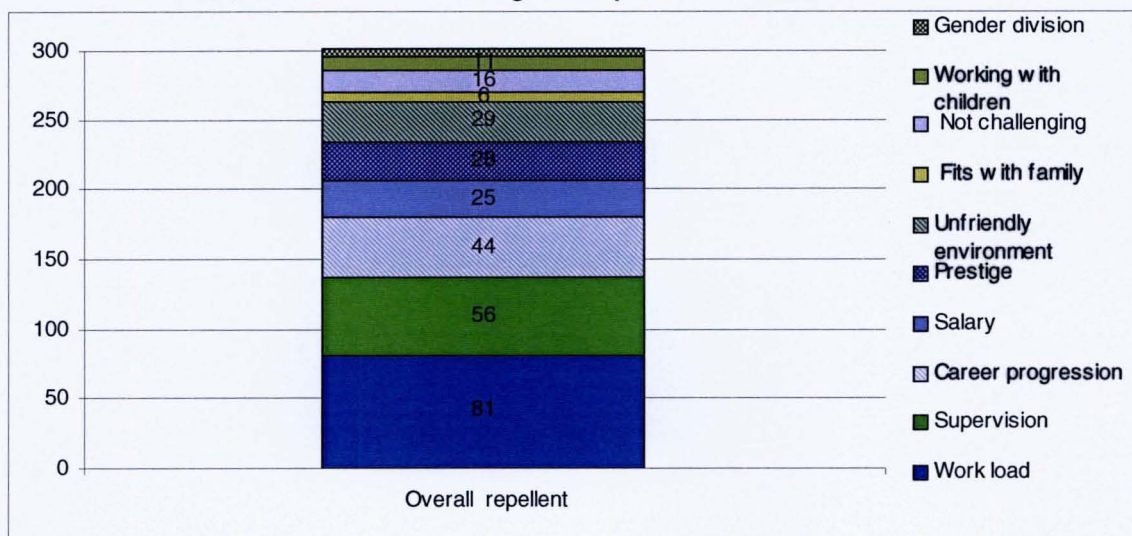
## I. Teacher Survey (Tables)

**Table 17E: The three main attractions in combination 300%**

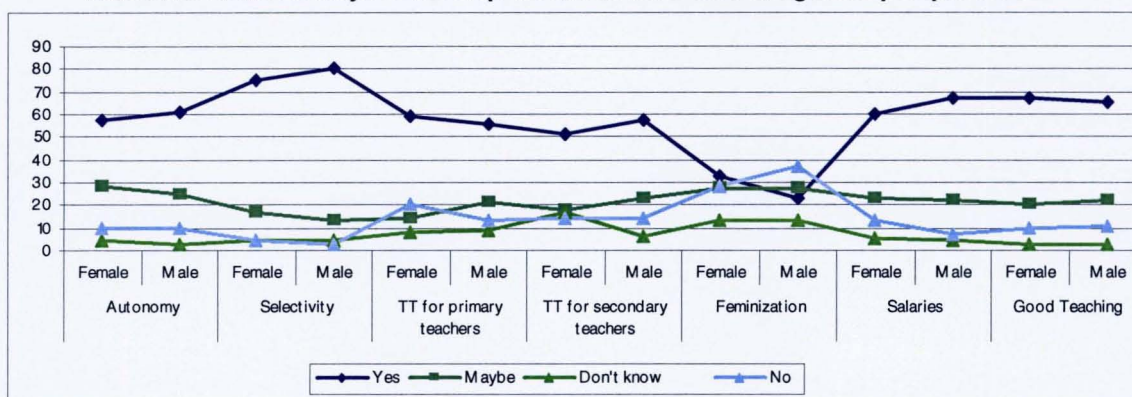




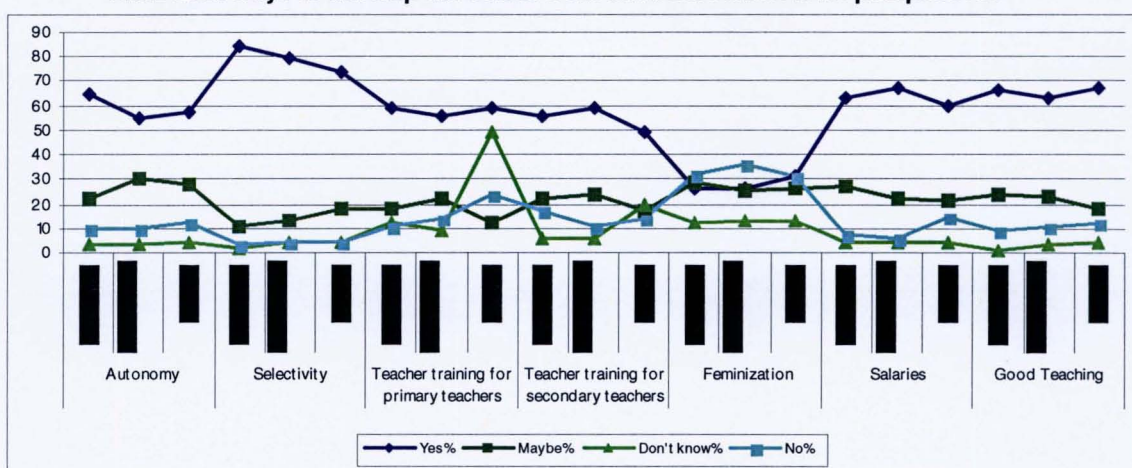
**Table 18F: The three main negative aspects in combination 300%**



**Table 29A: views on ways to develop the status from different gender perspectives**



**Table 29B: ways to develop the status from different school level perspectives**



**Table32: Reasons given for resigning (in England)**

Reason	Negative	Positive	Total	%
Workload	57	2	59	57.8
Pupil Behaviour	46	-	46	45.1
Govt initiatives	37	1	38	37.2
Salary	15	8	25	24.5
Stress	22	-	22	21.6
Status/Recognition	19	1	20	19.6
Career Prospects	5	13	18	17.6
School Management	15	-	15	14.7
Resources/Facilities	13	2	15	14.7
Travel	-	12	12	11.8
Parents	11	-	11	10.8
New Challenge	-	5	5	4.9
Others	4	-	4	4.0
Total	247	43	290	100.0

**Table 32A: Tempting Teachers Back (in England)**

Change	N	%
Reduced Workload	29	35.4
Improved Pupil Behaviour	22	26.8
Better Salary	20	24.4
Improved Status/Recognition	14	17.1
Fewer Initiatives	13	15.9
Better School Management	12	14.6
Small class size	12	1.6
More Non contract time	8	9.8
Curriculum and assessment	8	7.3
Total	114	100

**Table 32B: Attraction to teaching (in England)**

Attraction	N	Per Cent
Working with children/people	59	57.8
Love of subject	37	36.3
Working with people	15	14.7
Influences of parents etc.	15	14.7
Classroom Autonomy	11	12.7
Own school Experience/Inspiring Teacher	11	10.8
No Clear Intentions	9	8.8
Holidays	8	7.8
Fitted in with Family Life	8	7.8
Other	3	2.9
Total	178	100.0



## J. Student-teacher Survey (Tables)

**Table A**

Gender	Total
Female	75 (47%)
Male	84 (53%)
Total	159

**Table B**

Age	Total
17-22	85 (54%)
23-28	63 (39%)
28+	11 (7%)
Total	159

**Table C**

Status	Total
Single	84 (53%)
Married	17 (11%)
Married with children	58 (36%)
Total	159

**Table D**

Year of study	Total
First	32 (20%)
Second	43 (27%)
Third	50 (32%)
Fourth	34 (21%)
Total	159

**Table E**

Gender Social group	M	F	Total
Urban	62%	15%	22%
Suburban	41%	55%	47%
Mixed	33%	31%	31%

**Table F**

Speciality	Total
Humanity	56 (35%)
Science	43 (28%)
Others (Art, Music, PE...)	60 (37%)
Total	159

**Table G**

Specialty Social group	Humanities	Others	Science	Total
Urban	14%	63%	23%	100%
Suburb	47%	30%	23%	100%
Mixed	32%	32%	36%	100%
Total	35%	38%	27%	100%

**Table H**

Status Gender	Single	Married	Married with children	Total
Female	33%	17%	49%	100%
Male	70%	5%	25%	100%
Total	53%	11%	36%	100%

**Table I**

Social group Status	Urban	Mixed	Suburb	Total
Single	31%	38%	31%	100%
Married	35%	29%	35%	100%
Married with children	5%	22%	72%	100%
Total	22%	31%	47%	100%

**Table 1A: Types of students**

Variables	Types of students	Conservatives	Liberals	Poor	Wealthy	Religious	Unintelligent	Intelligent	Diverse	Others	Total
Gender	Female	45	9	0	0	26	0	4	16	0	100%
	Male	29	18	6	0	12	0	4	31	0	100%
Age	17-22	35	20	0	0	8	0	7	30	0	100%
	22-27	42	8	0	0	32	0	0	18	0	100%
	28+	18	0	45	0	18	0	0	18	0	100%
Status	Single	34	22	0	0	14	0	7	23	0	100%
	Married	53	18	0	0	6	0	0	24	0	100%
	Married with child	35	2	9	0	28	0	0	26	0	100%
Social group	Urban	17	31	0	0	17	0	9	26	0	100%
	Suburb	39	7	5	0	15	0	3	31	0	100%
	Mixed	46	13	2	0	25	0	2	13	0	100%
Year of study	First	26	32	0	0	0	0	6	35	0	100%
	Second	40	14	0	0	19	0	0	28	0	100%
	Third	48	6	2	0	24	0	8	12	0	100%
	Fourth	24	9	12	0	27	0	0	27	0	100%
Speciality	Humanities	44	4	7	0	15	0	5	25	0	100%
	Others	37	19	0	0	19	0	5	20	0	100%
	Science	26	21	2	0	23	0	0	28	0	100%
Total		36	14	3	0	18	0	4	24	0	100%



**Table 2A: Academically able students are likely to enter the College of Basic Education**

Variables	Academically able students likely to enter the College of Basic Education	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Female	3	24	18	51	4	2.7
	Male	4	9	34	49	4	2.6
Age	17-22	4	19	33	38	6	2.8
	22-27	3	15	19	61	2	2.6
	28+	0	0	36	64	0	2.4
Status	Single	4	13	36	41	6	2.7
	Married	0	41	6	53	0	2.9
	M with child	4	12	23	60	2	2.6
Social group	Urban	3	14	17	63	3	2.5
	Suburb	1	23	31	38	7	2.7
	Mixed	6	6	31	56	0	2.6
Year of study	First	3	16	28	47	6	2.6
	Second	2	14	42	35	7	2.7
	Third	2	16	20	62	0	2.6
	Fourth	6	18	21	52	3	2.7
Speciality	Humanities	4	25	22	47	2	2.8
	Others	5	8	35	47	5	2.6
	Science	0	14	26	56	5	2.5
Total		3	16	28	49	4	2.5

**Table 3A: Reasons to enter the college**

Variables	Reasons to enter the college	Easy to get in	Suits my social situation	Love for children	Love for teaching	Gender-division	Others	Total
Gender	Female	16	16	0	7	54	7	100%
	Male	51	7	1	12	12	17	100%
Age	17-22	40	11	0	13	22	14	100%
	22-27	24	13	2	5	47	10	100%
	28+	55	9	0	9	18	9	100%
Status	Single	43	10	0	13	21	13	100%
	Married	18	18	0	12	35	18	100%
	Married with child	28	12	2	4	46	9	100%
Social group	Urban	46	6	3	20	11	14	100%
	Suburb	30	12	0	3	47	8	100%
	Mixed	35	14	0	12	22	16	100%
Year of study	First	34	13	0	19	28	6	100%
	Second	40	14	0	5	21	21	100%
	Third	28	10	2	10	44	6	100%
	Fourth	39	9	0	6	30	15	100%
Speciality	Humanities	20	9	0	5	58	7	100%
	Others	43	12	0	15	12	18	100%
	Science	42	14	2	7	26	9	100%
Total		35	11	1	9	32	12	100%



Table 5A: The curriculum is?

Variables	The curriculum is	Challenging	Boring	Easy	Difficult	Progressive	Traditional	Total
Gender	Female	8	12	8	38	0	34	100%
	Male	5	13	10	14	2	56	100%
Age	17-22	8	8	13	28	2	40	100%
	22-27	5	16	5	26	0	48	100%
	28+	0	27	0	0	0	73	100%
Status	Single	8	8	13	21	2	46	100%
	Married	18	0	18	35	0	29	100%
	Married with child	0	23	0	28	0	49	100%
Social group	Urban	11	14	23	14	3	34	100%
	Suburb	3	18	3	34	1	42	100%
	Mixed	8	4	8	20	0	59	100%
Year of study	First	6	3	16	31	3	41	100%
	Second	5	7	12	28	0	49	100%
	Third	10	18	4	28	2	38	100%
	Fourth	3	21	6	12	0	58	100%
Speciality	Humanities	7	11	0	40	0	42	100%
	Others	7	12	17	17	3	45	100%
	Science	5	16	9	19	0	51	100%
Total		6	13	9	26	1	45	100%

Table 6A: The curriculum (how difficult)

Variables	The curriculum	Very easy	Easy	Not difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Total
Gender	Female	0	3	24	62	11	100%
	Male	0	2	48	45	5	100%
Age	17-22	0	5	48	39	8	100%
	22-27	0	0	26	66	8	100%
	28+	0	0	9	91	0	100%
Status	Single	0	5	49	39	7	100%
	Married	0	0	35	65	0	100%
	Married with children	0	0	19	70	11	100%
Social group	Urban	0	11	46	40	3	100%
	Suburb	0	0	30	61	9	100%
	Mixed	0	0	41	51	8	100%
Year of study	First	0	0	47	47	6	100%
	Second	0	5	53	35	7	100%
	Third	0	4	32	56	8	100%
	Fourth	0	0	12	79	9	100%
Speciality	Humanities	0	4	24	60	13	100%
	Others	0	3	48	43	5	100%
	Science	0	0	37	58	5	100%
Total		0	3	37	53	8	100%



**Table 7A: Repeated a module**

Variables	Repeated a module	Never	Yes, once	Yes, lots	Total
Gender	Female	46	34	20	100%
	Male	71	12	17	100%
Age	17-22	75	18	7	100%
	22-27	39	27	34	100%
	28+	55	27	18	100%
Status	Single	74	15	11	100%
	Married	76	12	12	100%
	Married with children	33	35	32	100%
Social group	Urban	80	11	9	100%
	Suburb	53	27	20	100%
	Mixed	55	22	22	100%
Year of study	First	81	19	0	100%
	Second	67	16	16	100%
	Third	46	30	24	100%
	Fourth	48	21	30	100%
Speciality	Humanities	51	31	18	100%
	Others	72	17	12	100%
	Science	53	19	28	100%
Total		59	22	18	100%

**Table 8A: Repeated a module**

Variables	Used the library	Never	1-4 times	5-10 times	11+	Total
Gender	Female	39	46	15	0	100%
	Male	38	35	24	3	100%
Age	17-22	43	39	18	0	100%
	22-27	34	52	13	2	100%
	28+	27	0	64	9	100%
Status	Single	43	39	17	1	100%
	Married	18	47	35	0	100%
	Married with children	37	44	18	2	100%
Social group	Urban	29	37	31	3	100%
	Suburb	42	39	19	0	100%
	Mixed	40	48	10	2	100%
Year of study	First	56	38	6	0	100%
	Second	40	47	14	0	100%
	Third	32	46	20	2	100%
	Fourth	30	30	36	3	100%
Speciality	Humanities	40	40	18	2	100%
	Others	32	43	23	2	100%
	Science	47	40	14	0	100%
Total		39	41	19	1	100%



**Table 9A: Essay required**

Variables	Essay required	None	1-4 times	5-10 times	11+	Total
Gender	Female	30	46	24	0	100%
	Male	18	49	32	1	100%
Age	17-22	32	42	26	0	100%
	22-27	13	63	19	5	100%
	28+	9	0	91	0	100%
Status	Single	27	46	25	2	100%
	Married	18	59	24	0	100%
	Married with children	19	46	33	2	100%
Social group	Urban	23	46	29	3	100%
	Suburb	27	41	30	3	100%
	Mixed	17	58	25	0	100%
Year of study	First	38	56	6	0	100%
	Second	26	51	23	0	100%
	Third	20	48	28	4	100%
	Fourth	9	30	58	3	100%
Speciality	Humanities	31	36	33	0	100%
	Others	15	47	33	5	100%
	Science	23	60	16	0	100%
Total		23	47	28	2	100%

**Table 10A: The most excellent characteristic of the college**

Variables	The most excellent characteristic of the college	Assessment style	The curriculum	Lecturers	Teaching methods	Total
Gender	Female	14	3	77	7	100%
	Male	20	10	63	7	100%
Age	17-22	15	12	65	7	100%
	22-27	11	0	81	8	100%
	28+	64	0	36	0	100%
Status	Single	13	10	69	8	100%
	Married	12	12	59	18	100%
	Married with children	25	0	74	2	100%
Social group	Urban	23	9	57	11	100%
	Suburb	15	3	76	7	100%
	Mixed	17	10	69	4	100%
Year of study	First	22	13	66	0	100%
	Second	10	7	71	12	100%
	Third	20	6	64	10	100%
	Fourth	18	0	79	3	100%
Speciality	Humanities	20	4	67	9	100%
	Others	14	12	66	8	100%
	Science	19	2	77	2%	100%
Total		17	6	70	7	100%



Table 11A: Main attraction to teaching

Variables	Main attraction to teaching profession	Salary	Single gender	Fits family	Holidays	Love for teaching	Progression	Status	Love for children	Challenging	Total
Gender	Female	18	50	22	8	0	0	0	1	1	100%
	Male	47	9	18	20	3	3	1	0	0	100%
Age	17-22	37	18	23	16	1	2	1	0	1	100%
	22-27	28	48	12	8	2	0	0	2	0	100%
	28+	27	0	36	36	0	0	0	0	0	100%
Status	Single	38	16	24	15	3	3	1	0	1	100%
	Married	47	29	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	100%
	Married with children	21	46	18	13	0	0	0	2	0	100%
Social group	Urban	37	14	26	23	0	0	0	0	0	100%
	Suburb	23	39	25	10	0	3	0	0	0	100%
	Mixed	45	23	6	15	4	0	2	2	2	100%
Year of study	First	41	16	28	6	3	0	3	0	3	100%
	Second	33	26	17	19	0	5	0	0	0	100%
	Third	26	38	19	15	0	0	0	2	0	100%
	Fourth	36	30	15	15	3	0	0	0	0	100%
Speciality	Humanities	20	40	29	11	0	0	0	0	0	100%
	Others	38	14	16	25	0	4	0	2	2	100%
	Science	44	33	12	5	5	0	2	0	0	100%
Total		33	29	19	14	1	1	1	1	1	100%

Table 12A: Main disadvantage of teaching

Variables	Main disadvantage of teaching profession	Work load	Constant supervision	Status	Salary	Love for teaching	Working with children	Progression	Total
Gender	Female	70	8	14	5	0	1	1	100%
	Male	68	13	3	1	7	8	0	100%
Age	17-22	58	14	12	4	5	7	0	100%
	22-27	79	8	3	3	3	2	2	100%
	28+	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	100%
Status	Single	59	12	12	5	7	5	0	100%
	Married	31	38	0	6	0	19	6	100%
	Married with children	96	0	4	0	0	0	0	100%
Social group	Urban	41	25	9	6	6	13	0	100%
	Suburb	81	8	5	1	3	0	1	100%
	Mixed	71	4	10	4	4	6	0	100%
Year of study	First	63	9	19	0	3	6	0	100%
	Second	70	15	5	3	5	3	0	100%
	Third	64	8	6	6	6	8	2	100%
	Fourth	82	12	3	3	0	0	0	100%
Speciality	Humanities	78	0	13	5	0	2	2	100%
	Others	51	21	4	4	11	11	0	100%
	Science	81	12	7	0	0	0	0	100%
Total		69	11	8	4	4	4	1	100%



Table 14A: Kuwaitis respect teachers

Variables	Kuwaitis respect teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Female	3	30	38	28	1	3.9
	Male	10	59	23	6	1	4.1
Age	17-22	8	43	37	11	1	4.0
	22-27	8	48	16	26	2	3.9
	28+	0	27	64	9	0	4.2
Status	Single	12	45	31	10	2	3.8
	Married	0	35	29	35	0	4.0
	Married with children	4	46	30	21	0	4.1
Social group	Urban	9	49	31	9	3	4.0
	Suburb	8	42	35	15	0	4.0
	Mixed	6	44	23	25	2	3.9
Year of study	First	13	47	41	0	0	4.0
	Second	5	53	28	14	0	4.2
	Third	8	38	24	26	4	3.7
	Fourth	6	36	36	21	0	3.9
Speciality	Humanities	0	40	36	24	0	4.2
	Others	12	45	18	22	3	3.7
	Science	12	47	42	0	0	4.0
Total		8	44	31	16	1	4.0

Table 15A: Teachers are appreciated in Kuwait

Variables	Teachers are appreciated in Kuwait	Yes	Perhaps	Don't know	No	Total
Gender	Female	5	61	16	18	100%
	Male	14	53	15	18	100%
Age	17-22	13	57	17	13	100%
	22-27	10	48	16	26	100%
	28+	0	100	0	0	100%
Status	Single	19	51	13	17	100%
	Married	0	59	24	18	100%
	M with child	2	65	16	18	100%
Social group	Urban	20	49	26	6	100%
	Suburb	8	61	16	15	100%
	Mixed	8	56	6	29	100%
Year of study	First	19	50	22	9	100%
	Second	9	60	7	23	100%
	Third	14	50	22	14	100%
	Fourth	3	67	9	21	100%
Speciality	Humanities	5	62	16	16	100%
	Others	18	50	13	18	100%
	Science	9	58	16	16	100%
Total		11	56	15	17	100%



**Table 16A: Teachers have lower status than other graduate professions**

Variables	Teachers have lower status than other graduate professions	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Female	28	58	14	0	0	3.5
	Male	9	34	27	23	8	3.6
Age	17-22	31	25	26	12	6	2.8
	22-27	5	69	8	16	2	4.3
	28+	0	64	36	0	0	4.7
Status	Single	24	28	27	17	5	3.1
	Married	18	59	6	6	12	3.6
	M with child	11	67	14	9	0	4.2
Social group	Urban	14	34	31	14	6	3.5
	Suburb	22	50	14	15	0	3.5
	Mixed	17	46	21	8	8	3.6
Year of study	First	28	22	22	13	16	2.7
	Second	16	35	37	9	2	3.6
	Third	12	64	10	14	0	4.0
	Fourth	21	52	9	15	3	3.5
Speciality	Humanities	25	56	13	5	0	3.5
	Others	10	38	25	22	5	3.7
	Science	21	40	21	9	9	3.3
Total		18	45	20	13	4	4.5

**Table 17A: Teachers have equal status with other graduate professions**

Variables	Teachers have the same prestige like other university graduate occupations.	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Female	0	8	30	53	9	3.4
	Male	9	13	38	35	3	3.3
Age	17-22	7	15	37	33	5	3.3
	22-27	2	6	29	55	8	3.3
	28+	0	0	55	45	0	3.6
Status	Single	8	14	36	37	1	3.3
	Married	0	0	24	53	24	3.0
	M with child	0	9	37	47	7	3.5
Social group	Urban	6	11	43	34	6	3.4
	Suburb	3	12	31	46	7	3.4
	Mixed	6	8	35	44	4	3.2
Year of study	First	6	16	44	34	0	3.6
	Second	7	9	40	40	0	3.3
	Third	4	16	28	50	2	3.5
	Fourth	3	0	30	42	24	3.0
Speciality	Humanities	2	15	25	51	5	3.4
	Others	8	10	45	33	2	3.3
	Science	5	7	33	44	12	3.2
Total		5	11	35	42	6	3.3



**Table 18A: College of Basic Education has low status**

Variables	College of Basic Education has low status	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Female	18	70	8	4	0	4.0
	Male	16	61	11	9	3	3.8
Age	17-22	30	51	8	8	2	4.0
	22-27	3	84	8	5	0	3.9
	28+	0	73	27	0	0	3.7
Status	Single	20	59	7	11	2	3.8
	Married	24	59	18	0	0	4.1
	Married with children	11	77	11	2	0	4.0
Social group	Urban	23	49	11	14	3	3.8
	Suburb	20	68	11	1	0	4.1
	Mixed	8	75	6	8	2	3.8
Year of study	First	13	63	19	3	3	3.8
	Second	28	58	2	9	2	4.0
	Third	12	80	0	8	0	4.0
	Fourth	15	58	24	3	0	3.9
Speciality	Humanities	9	75	11	5	0	3.9
	Others	25	55	12	8	0	4.0
	Science	16	70	5	5	5	3.9
Total		17	66	9	6	1	3.9

**Table 19A: Education College has higher status than College of Basic Education**

Variables	Education College has higher status than College of Basic Education	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Female	31	64	5	0	0	3.4
	Male	35	52	5	8	0	3.1
Age	17-22	54	37	4	6	0	2.2
	22-27	15	81	2	3	0	4.2
	28+	0	64	36	0	0	4.7
Status	Single	47	41	4	8	0	2.5
	Married	41	59	0	0	0	3.0
	Married with children	14	77	9	0	0	4.2
Social group	Urban	37	49	9	6	0	3.0
	Suburb	41	54	3	3	0	2.9
	Mixed	23	65	6	6	0	3.7
Year of study	First	63	34	0	3	0	1.8
	Second	35	49	7	9	0	3.0
	Third	30	66	2	2	0	3.5
	Fourth	15	70	12	3	0	4.1
Speciality	Humanities	27	65	5	2	0	3.5
	Others	45	42	8	5	0	2.6
	Science	30	63	0	7	0	3.4
Total		35	56	5	4	0	3.1



**Table 20A: Primary teachers have lower status than secondary teachers**

Variables	Primary teachers have lower status than secondary teachers	Strongly agree	Agree	Hesitant	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean
Gender	Female	14	54	27	5	0	3.9
	Male	11	67	18	4	0	4.2
Age	17-22	10	60	24	7	0	4.2
	22-27	19	60	19	2	0	3.8
	28+	0	73	27	0	0	4.7
Status	Single	7	64	22	7	0	4.3
	Married	18	59	18	6	0	3.9
	M with child	19	56	25	0	0	3.8
Social group	Urban	11	57	26	6	0	4.1
	Suburb	16	59	22	3	0	3.9
	Mixed	8	65	21	6	0	4.3
Year of study	First	9	69	9	13	0	4.2
	Second	16	53	26	5	0	3.9
	Third	10	62	26	2	0	4.2
	Fourth	15	61	24	0	0	4.0
Speciality	Humanities	11	75	15	0	0	4.4
	Others	17	62	15	7	0	3.9
	Science	9	42	42	7	0	4.0
Total		13	61	22	4	0	4.1

**Table 21A: Teaching requires special skills**

Variables	Teaching requires special skills	Yes	Perhaps	Don't know	No	Total
Gender	Female	35	61	4	0	100%
	Male	59	39	1	0	100%
Age	17-22	61	38	1	0	100%
	22-27	35	60	5	0	100%
	28+	36	64	0	0	100%
Status	Single	57	42	1	0	100%
	Married	59	41	0	0	100%
	M with child	35	60	5	0	100%
Social group	Urban	69	31	0	0	100%
	Suburb	47	49	4	0	100%
	Mixed	38	60	2	0	100%
Year of study	First	78	19	3	0	100%
	Second	35	58	7	0	100%
	Third	62	38	0	0	100%
	Fourth	21	79	0	0	100%
Speciality	Humanities	53	44	4	0	100%
	Others	52	47	2	0	100%
	Science	42	56	2	0	100%
Total		49	48	3	0	100%



## K. Kuwait Demographics

**Population:** 2, 418, 393 including 1,291,1354 non-nationals (July 2006 est.)

**Age structure:**

0-14 years: 26.9 %

15-64 years: 70.3%

65 years and over: 2.8% (2006 est.)

**Sex ratio:**

at birth: 1.04 male(s)/female

under 15 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

15-64 years: 1.77 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 1.74 male(s)/female

total population: 1.52 male(s)/female (2006 est.)

**Life expectancy at birth:**

total population: 77.03 years

male: 76.01 years

female: 78.1 years (2006 est.)

**Total fertility rate:** 2.97 children born/woman (2006 est.)

**Ethnic groups:** Kuwaiti 45%, other Arab 35%, South Asian 9%, Iranian 4%, other 7%

**Religions:** Muslim 85% (Sunni 45%, Shi'a 40%), Christian, Hindu, Parsi, and other 15%

**Literacy:**

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 83.5%

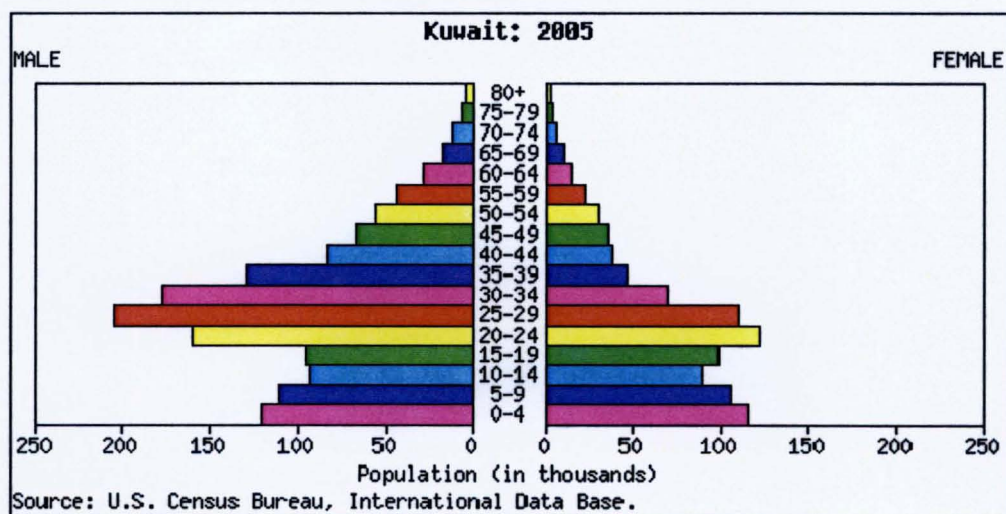
male: 85.1%

female: 81.7% (2003 est.)

### Distribution of the population by age

Age group	Total no, of population in %
0-4	10.10
5-9	9.25
10-14	7.83
15-19	8.35
20-24	12.16
25-29	13.48
30-34	10.62
35-39	7.53
40-44	5.18
45-49	4.41
50-54	3.68
55-59	2.83
60-64	1.84
65-69	1.24
70-74	0.77
75-79	0.43
80-84	0.26

### Distribution of the population by age and gender



## استفتاء عالم

الغرض من الاستبيان التعرف على مكانة المعلم في دولة الكويت

(يرجى توزيع النسخ المتوفرة لديك على أفراد عائلتك (أب / أم / عم / عمة / أخ / أخت / جد / جدة)

- السن: 17-10 ☐ 22-18 ☐ 35-23 ☐ 50-36 ☐ 65-51 ☐ +65 ☐
- الجنس: ☐ ذكر ☐ أنثى
- هل لديك أبناء: ☐ نعم ☐ لا
- علاقتك الاجتماعية بالطالب .....

1. الكويتيون يحترمون المعلم بشكل ملحوظ

☐وافق بشدة ☐وافق ☐لاوافق ☐لاوافق بشدة

2. المكانة الاجتماعية لكلية التربية الأساسية منخفضة

☐وافق بشدة ☐وافق ☐لاوافق ☐لاوافق بشدة

3. المكانة الاجتماعية لكلية التربية اعلى بكثير من كلية التربية الاساسية

☐وافق بشدة ☐وافق ☐لاوافق ☐لاوافق بشدة

4. المدرسون يستحقون ان يكون لهم مكانة افضل في المجتمع

☐وافق بشدة ☐وافق ☐لاوافق ☐لاوافق بشدة

5. مكانة المعلم الاجتماعية في نظر الشعب الكويتي

☐عالية ☐متوسطة ☐منخفضة

6. المدرس الاجنبى اكثر ثقافة و تفانى في العمل من المدرس الكويتي

☐وافق بشدة ☐وافق ☐لاوافق ☐لاوافق بشدة

7. بشكل عام المدرسون في الكويت يستحقون على ادائهم تقدير:

☐امتياز ☐جيد ☐ضعيف

8. المستوى التعليمي في الكويت في انخفاض مستمر

☐وافق بشدة ☐وافق ☐لاوافق ☐لاوافق بشدة

9. من اخطر المشاكل التعليمية التي تواجهنا في الكويت:

☐المناهج ☐نوعية المدرسين ☐عدم رغبة الطلبة في التعلم ☐طرق التدريس

10. السبب الرئيسى لدخول الكويتيون مجال التدريس:

☐حياة مريحة ☐سهولة ان تصبح معلم ☐حب التدريس و العمل مع اطفال ☐امان وظيفي(الراتب)



**إستبيان لطلبة الثانوية العامة**  
**الغرض من الاستبيان التعرف على مكانة المعلم في دولة الكويت**

**أ- البيانات الشخصية**

الجنس: ☐ ذكر ☐ أنثى  
التخصص: ☐ أدبي ☐ علمي  
المعدل الدراسي: ☐ إمتياز ☐ جيد جدا ☐ جيد ☐ مقبول

**ب- الطموحات المهنية**

- 1- هل تنوي إستكمال دراستك ☐ نعم ☐ لا ☐ لم أقرر
- 2- إذا كانت إجابتك نعم، فما هو مجال دراستك المستقبلية..... ☐ نعم ☐ لا ☐ لم أقرر
- 3- هل فكرت أن تلتحق بمجال التدريس ☐ نعم ☐ لا ☐ لم أقرر

ما أهمية المؤثرات التالية في إتخاذ هذا القرار (إذا كنت لا تفكر بالتدريس، إنتقل إلى سؤال رقم 16)

عالي الأهمية  
1 2 3 4 5  
غير مهم

4-	التدريس الجيد المتواجد حالياً	
5-	التدريس الضعيف المتواجد حالياً	
6-	الرغبة في العمل مع المادة التي أحبها	
7-	الرغبة في العمل مع الأطفال	
8-	إنطباعات عن التدريس	
9-	التدريس يناسب الحياة العائلية	
10-	الراتب	
11-	سلوك الطلبة	
12-	إنطباعات عن الوظائف الأخرى	
13-	التدرج الوظيفي لمهنة التدريس	
14-	الأمان الوظيفي	

15- في رأيك أي من النقاط التالية تجذبك لمهنة التدريس: اختر نقطة

- ☐ الراتب ☐ ضغط العمل ☐ الإجازات ☐ التدرج  
☐ الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم ☐ عدم الرتبة والقدرة على الإبداع ☐  
☐ العمل تحت إشراف مستمر ☐ عدم الإختلاط ☐  
☐ سهولة العمل في مجال التدريس ☐ الوظيفة تناسب الحياة الأسرية ☐  
☐ سهولة الالتحاق بكليات التربية ☐

16- في رأيك أي من النقاط التالية تنفرك من مهنة التدريس: اختر نقطة

- ☐ الراتب ☐ ضغط العمل ☐ التدرج الوظيفي ☐ عدم الإختلاط ☐  
☐ الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم ☐ عدم الرتبة والقدرة على الإبداع ☐  
☐ العمل تحت إشراف مستمر ☐

ب- الرأي العام

إلى أي مدى تؤيد الجمل التالية (ضع علامة على المربع)

17- التدريس مهنة غير شيقة ولكن الراتب جيد:

- ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

18- المكانة الاجتماعية للمعلم متدنية مقارنة بالوظائف الجامعية الأخرى:

- ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

19- إذا ارتقت مكانة المعلم سيصبح التدريس مهنة جاذبة:

- ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

20- كلية التربية الأساسية في الكويت لها صورة إجتماعية عالية:

- ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

21- الطلبة المتفوقون في الغالب يلتحقون بكليات التربية

- ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

22- المعلم يتمتع بنفس المكانة الإجتماعية التي تتمتع بها الوظائف الجامعية الأخرى:

- ☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

23- هل المدرس مقدر في دولة الكويت:

- ☐ بالطبع نعم ☐ نعم ☐ ممكن ☐ لا ☐ بالطبع لا

24- هل تعتقد أن التدريس يحتاج إلى مهارات خاصة وخبرة ؟

- ☐ بالطبع نعم ☐ نعم ☐ ممكن ☐ لا ☐ بالطبع لا

25- من المهن التالية أي ثلاثة منها في رأيك تعد أكثر نبلا ؟ (اختر نقطة)

- ☐ معلم ☐ طبيب ☐ رجل دين ☐ محامي ☐  
☐ ضابط ☐ سياسي ☐ غيرهم ☐

26- من المهن التالية أي ثلاثة منها في رأيك لها أعلى مكانة إجتماعية؟ (اختر نقطة)

- ☐ معلم ☐ طبيب ☐ رجل دين ☐ محامي ☐  
☐ سياسي ☐ ضابط ☐ غيرهم ☐

27- من مقياس الرسم (1) إلى (10) أين تضع المعلم مقارنة بالمهنة الجامعية الأخرى (من ناحية الصورة الاجتماعية)

أعلى					أدنى				
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

28- هل فكرت أن تلتحق بمجال التدريس؟ لماذا؟

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



**إستبيان للمعلمين والمعلمات**  
**الغرض من الاستبيان التعرف على مكانة المعلم الاجتماعية في دولة الكويت**

**أ- البيانات الشخصية (ضع علامة على المربع)**

مدرس: ☐ ابتدائي ☐ متوسط ☐ ثانوي  
 الجنس: ☐ ذكر ☐ أنثى  
 الجنسية: ☐ كويتي ☐ غير كويتي  
 الشهادة العملية: ☐ دبلومة ☐ بكالوريوس تربية ☐ بكالوريوس ☐ شهادة أخرى  
 سنوات الخبرة: .....  
 سنة الميلاد: .....  
 التخصص: .....

**ب- الرأي العام**

إلى أي مدى تؤيد الجمل التالية (ضع علامة على المربع)

- 1- التدريس مهنة غير شاقة ولكن الراتب جيد:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 2- المكانة الاجتماعية للمعلم متدنية مقارنة بالوظائف الجامعية الأخرى:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 3- إذا ارتقت مكانة المعلم سيصبح التدريس مهنة جاذبة:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 4- كلية التربية الأساسية في الكويت لها صورة إجتماعية عالية:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 5- كلية التربية في الكويت لها صورة إجتماعية عالية:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 6- الطلبة المتفوقون في الغالب يلتحقون بكلية التربية الأساسية:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 7- الطلبة المتفوقون في الغالب يلتحقون بكلية التربية:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 8- لا يقدر المعلم ويحترم كما كان بالسابق:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة
- 9- المعلم يتمتع بنفس المكانة الإجتماعية التي تتمتع بها الوظائف الجامعية الأخرى:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

- 10- الصورة الاجتماعية لمعلم المرحلة الابتدائية تختلف عن معلم المرحلة الثانوية :  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

- 11- المدرس مقدر في دولة الكويت:  
☐ أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ متردد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة

ج- مقارنة بالوظائف الأخرى: (ضع علامة على المربع)

- 12- هل تعتقد أن التدريس يحتاج إلى مهارات خاصة وخبرة ؟  
☐ بالطبع نعم ☐ نعم ☐ ممكن ☐ لا ☐ بالطبع لا

- 13- من المهن التالية أي ثلاثة منها في رأيك تعد أكثر نبلا ؟ (اختر نقطة)  
☐ معلم ☐ طبيب ☐ رجل دين ☐ محامي  
☐ ضابط ☐ سياسي ☐ ممرض ☐ غيرهم

- 14- من المهن التالية أي ثلاثة منها في رأيك لها أعلى مكانة إجتماعية؟ (اختر نقطة)  
☐ معلم ☐ طبيب ☐ رجل دين ☐ محامي  
☐ ضابط ☐ سياسي ☐ ممرض ☐ غيرهم

- د- أرايك حول كلية التربية وكلية التربية الأساسية  
 سجل إلى أي مدى تؤيد الجمل التالية (ضع الرقم أمام الخانة في الجدول)  
 1- بالتأكيد غير صحيح  
 2- غير صحيح  
 3- لا أعلم  
 4- صحيح  
 5- بالتأكيد صحيح

15	مناهج كليات التربية مواكبة لطبيعة العصر
16	مناهج كليات التربية تحمس الطلبة وتحفزهم على الإبداع
17	طلبة كلية التربية يتعاملون مع التقنيات الحديثة
18	مكانة المعلم لا تؤثر على دخول مجال التدريس
19	الطلبة الأوائل لا يميلون لدخول كلية التربية
20	الصورة الاجتماعية لكلية التربية الأساسية متدنية
21	سوف أشجع أبنائي أن يصبحوا معلمين

هـ- سبل لتحسين وضع المعلم

- 22- إعطاء المعلم حرية وسلطة في كيفية وطرق تدريس مادة تخصصه من المحتم أن يؤثر ذلك على مكانة المعلم الإجتماعية  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا
- 23- المهنة تحتاج لنوع من التصفية، يجب قبول طلبة على مستوى جيد لدخول كلية التربية  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا
- 24- زيادة فترة التربية العملية لمدرسين المرحلة الابتدائية  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا

- 25- زيادة فترة التربية العملية لمدرسين المرحلة الثانوية  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا
- 26- زيادة عدد النساء في مهنة التدريس يؤثر إيجابياً على الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا
- 27- زيادة راتب المعلم سوف يحل مشكلة الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا
- 28- التدريس الجيد هو العلاج الذي نحتاجه لتغيير صورة المعلم في المجتمع الكويتي  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا
- 29- الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم تؤرقنا كمعلمين  
☐ نعم ☐ احتمال ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا
- 30- في رأيك أي من النقاط التالية تجذبك لمهنة التدريس: اختر ثلاث نقاط ورقمهم حسب أهميتهم الراتب  
☐ ضغط العمل ☐ الإجازات ☐ التدرج الوظيفي ☐ الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم  
☐ عدم الرتبة والقدرة على الإبداع ☐ العمل تحت إشراف مستمر ☐ عدم الاختلاط ☐ العمل مع الأطفال ☐ الوظيفة تناسب الحياة الأسرية ☐ المودة بين الزملاء
- 31- في رأيك أي من النقاط التالية تنفرك من مهنة التدريس: اختر ثلاث نقاط ورقمهم حسب أهميتهم  
☐ الراتب ☐ ضغط العمل ☐ التدرج الوظيفي ☐ عدم الاختلاط ☐ الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم ☐ العمل تحت إشراف مستمر ☐ العمل مع الأطفال ☐ المناشبات بين الزملاء ☐ الوظيفة تناسب الحياة الأسرية
- 32- من مقياس الرسم (1) إلى (10) أين تضع المعلم مقارنة بالمهنة الجامعية الأخرى  
(من ناحية الصورة الاجتماعية)

أعلى											أدنى
10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		



33- هل أنت راض عن وضع المعلم الاجتماعي في دولة الكويت؟

بالطبع نعم ☐ نعم ☐ أحياناً ☐ لا ☐ بالطبع لا ☐

34- من وجهة نظرك كيف يمكن أن تحسن مكانة المعلم في دولة الكويت؟

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## استبيان لطلبة الكلية الأساسية

### المعلومات الشخصية

- الجنس : ذكر ☐ أنثى ☐
- العمر : 22-17 ☐ 28-23 ☐ +28 ☐
- الحالة الاجتماعية: أعزب ☐ متزوج ☐ متزوج ويعول ☐
- في أي محافظة تقطن ؟ العاصمة ☐ حولي ☐ الفروانية ☐
- الأحمدي ☐ الجهراء ☐ مبارك الكبير ☐
- السنة الدراسية؟ الأولى ☐ الثانية ☐ الثالثة ☐ الرابعة ☐
- التخصص؟ \_\_\_\_\_

### 1- ما هي دوافع دخولك الكلية؟

- سهولة الالتحاق ☐ عدم الإختلاط ☐ حب العمل مع الأطفال ☐
- مناسب لظروفي الإجتماعية ☐ حب التدريس ☐ أسباب أخرى ☐
- أذكر لو لديك أسباب أخرى \_\_\_\_\_

### 2- كم مرة احتجت للذهاب إلى المكتبة منذ التحاقك بالكلية؟

- لم أحتج ☐ 4-1 ☐ 10-5 ☐ 11 أو أكثر ☐

### 3- كم بحث طلب منك منذ التحاقك بالكلية؟

- لم يطلب ☐ 4-1 ☐ 10-5 ☐ 11 أو أكثر ☐

### 4- رأيك بالكلية؟

- شيقة ☐ صعبة ☐ رجعية (تقليدية) ☐
- مملة ☐ سهلة ☐ متطورة ☐

### 5- حدد مدى صعوبة المنهج:

- صعب جدا ☐ صعب ☐ ليس صعب ☐ سهل ☐ سهل جدا ☐

### 6- هل اضطرت لإعادة مادة؟

- نعم أعدت مادة فقط ☐ نعم أعدت أكثر من مادة ☐ لا ☐

### 7- ما هي أفضل سمات الكلية؟

- المناهج ☐ طرق التدريس ☐ طرق الامتحانات ☐ أساتذة الكلية ☐

### 8- كيف توصف طلبة الكلية :

- محافظون ☐ متفتحون ☐ أغنياء ☐ متدينون ☐ أذكاء ☐ فقراء ☐

### 9- هل تعجبك مهنة التدريس:

- نعم ☐ لا ☐

- 10- ما الذي يعجبك في مهنة التدريس ؟ (أذكر سبب واحد فقط)
- الراتب ☐ الصورة الاجتماعية للمهنة ☐ ضغط العمل ☐ الإجازات ☐  
 العمل مع الأطفال ☐ العمل تحت إشراف ☐ عدم الاختلاط ☐ التدريس ☐  
 التدرج المهني ☐ عمل شيق ☐ مناسب للحياة الأسرية ☐
- 11- ما الذي ينفرك من مهنة التدريس ؟ (أذكر سبب واحد فقط)
- الراتب ☐ الصورة الاجتماعية للمهنة ☐ ضغط العمل ☐ الإجازات ☐  
 العمل مع الأطفال ☐ العمل تحت إشراف ☐ عدم الاختلاط ☐ التدريس ☐  
 التدرج المهني ☐ عمل شيق ☐ مناسب للحياة الأسرية ☐
- 12- الكويتيون يحترمون المعلم؟
- أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ غير متأكد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة ☐
- 13- كلية التربية الأساسية مكانتها منخفضة بالكويت؟
- أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ غير متأكد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة ☐
- 14- كلية التربية بجامعة الكويت لها مكانة أعلى من كلية التربية الأساسية؟
- أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ غير متأكد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة ☐
- 15- مكانة المعلم الاجتماعية أقل من الوظائف الجامعية الأخرى؟
- أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ غير متأكد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة ☐
- 16- الطلبة المتفوقون غالباً ما يلتحقون بكلية التربية؟
- أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ غير متأكد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة ☐
- 17- المدرسون لهم نفس المكانة الاجتماعية للوظائف الجامعية الأخرى؟
- أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ غير متأكد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة ☐
- 18- الصورة الاجتماعية تختلف من مدرس الابتدائي عن مدرس الثانوي؟
- أوافق بشدة ☐ أوافق ☐ غير متأكد ☐ لا أوافق ☐ لا أوافق بشدة ☐
- 19- الصورة الاجتماعية للمعلم بالكويت:
- عالية ☐ متوسطة ☐ منخفضة ☐
- 20- هل تعتقد أن التدريس يحتاج إلى قدرات ومهارات خاصة؟
- نعم ☐ إلى حد ما ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا ☐
- 21- هل المعلم مقدر في دولة الكويت؟
- نعم ☐ إلى حد ما ☐ لا أعلم ☐ لا ☐



22- من وجهة نظرك كيف يمكن أن نرتقي بالصورة الاجتماعية للكلية؟

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....